

Liberty of Conscience

46 A S S E R T I O N

A Looking-Glass

PERSECUTORS.

Being a plain Deduction from

Scripture-History

Original Grounds & Pretences

PERSECUTION.

The **METHODS** taken to put the same in Execution.

Together with the sad *Consequences* thereof: Or, The *Remarks* that attends *Persecuting-Spirits*.

LONDON, Printed and sold by R. Janaway in Queens-Head-Alley, in Pater-Noster-Row, 1687.

A PREFACE to the READER.

Christian Reader,

Persecution for Religion is almost *old as the World*; The first Murther under the Sun, being committed on that account, when Cain assassinated his righteous Brother Abel, merely because he worshipp'd God better than himself; and ever since the Enmity has continued: And when it will please Almighty Wisdom to put a final Period to such Practices throughout the World, we are not able to determine.

But since *divine Providence* has graciously dispos'd the Royal Heart of our Gracious Sovereign, as to give a Stop, and we hope, total Abolition thereunto, in the Land of our Nativity; and to open a Door to the Oppressed, that they may both peaceably worship their Creator, according to the best of their Light; and freely remonstrate the Evils of the Persecuting Spirit, to those who lately were so injuriously possess'd thereof, the ever to be complain'd of those Severities we unjustly suffered, was made a new Crime. It must certainly be our Duty to improve this Opportunity as far as we can, to the common Interest of Christianity.

Not in the least to reflect upon, or upbraid any for past Miscarriages; much less to stir up any Heart-burnings, or passions towards Revenge or Animosities; but only to convince such as have been a hand in right Persecutions against their Neighbors, merely on the Score of a Conscientious Dissent in Matters of Religion, of the Evil of such Proceedings; and to caution all others for the future, against the like Violences.

To advance these good and wholesome Ends, is the design and purport of the following Treatise; which in a plain familiar Style, endeavors to give the World a true Prospect of the Evils derived from the Original Causes, and several grounds from whence Persecution has in all Ages arise, and been propagated amongst Men. The Means, Methods, and Pretences, whereby the same has been carried on and palliated: As likewise the sad Consequences thereof in the heavy Judgments, righteously inflicted by Almighty God, (even in this World,) on those that have been guilty of such Outrages.

In short, As the natural Man views his own Vissage and all the Lineaments of his Countenance in a common Glasse, so every Marthering Cain, or Oppressive Pharaoh, or Envious Haman, or Blasphemous Rabshekah, or Raging Samballat, or Bloody Herod, or Treacherous Judas, and all and every their Successors, may in this Portraiture, (drawn to the Life by the Holy Ghost, in the Inspired Writings,) behold represented the true Character of themselves, their Motives, Designs, Ways, Affairs, and (without sincere Repentance,) of their final Doom and Destruction too.

That the divine Blessing may so far accompany this Mean, but well-intended Work, as to render it instrumental to bring some that have been Concern'd in this Kind, to an hearty Acknowledgment of their Crimes: And to make Persecution for Conscience, an Abhorrence to all that profess to call on the Name of the Blessed JESUS, who is both the Prince of Peace, the Fountain of Love, the grand Exemplar of Meekness, and Author of all Consolation,

Shall be the Prayer of the Publisher, H. C.

Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our Learning, &c.
 Rom. XV. 3, 4.

These things hapned to them for Examples: and they were written for our Admonition, upon whom the ends of the World are come, 1 Cor. X. 11.

THE Holy Scriptures being written and continued for the Learning and Admonition of those who should live in future Ages; especially, of those upon whom the ends of the World are come. It doth highly concern every one (who believes the things therein written, to be Truth and Verity,) to be instructing themselves in the Matters which these divine Records do contain; to the end, that they may learn and be admonished thereby, to follow the good Examples of Christ himself, and of the eminent Saints therein mentioned; be of such a Spirit as they were of; walk, and do as they did, that it may be well with them in the latter end! And to the intent that they may take heed of being found in the Spirit and Practices of some others who lived in those days, and were of a contrary Temper to the former, and did otherwise than they did; and so consequently, escape the direful Effects, which in those days fell upon some of these latter ones; and that all such may be assured, they shall feel at the last day.

One grand thing therefore written, and here and there to be found scattered in those divine Records, worthy observation, and to be seriously considered by all Men, (tho I fear, least observed, or slightly thought on by most,) as that which is a Matter of no small moment and concern to them, for the warning and awakening of some, comfort and quiet of others, is this, *viz.* The great Opposition between the Two Seeds of the Serpent and the Woman, the World and Christ; those who are born after the Flesh, and those who are born after the Spirit; those who are yet of the World, and those who are called out of the World; the wicked of the World, and the Saints of the most High God. No sooner were Men born from above, and evidenced the same by their Works, but wicked Men not yet born again, were ready to devour them; as the Prophet Isaiah saith, Chap. 59. 13. *He who departeth from evil, maketh himself a prey.* No sooner depart from Evil, but the Teeth of the wicked were edged against them.

The Evidences of which, the Scripture hath abundantly delivered down to after Ages: It testifieth, not only of the Enmity, Envy, Malice, and bitterness which was rooted, seated, and predominated in the Breasts of Men, whilst in the Flesh, yet Children of the wicked One in those Ages, against them who were born of the Spirit, Subjects of the King of Kings, followers of God and Christ, yea, against Holiness it self, against the Laws of Christ, and his Government; their Hearts said as Pharaoh did, Exod. 5. 2. *Who is the Lord, that I should obey him?* And as Christ in a Parable, intimates the Hearts of the Jews to be, saying, Luke 19. in these words, His Citizens hated him, and said, *We will not have this Man to rule over us.* v. 14. *Nor will we endure any of his Subjects.* But also of the very Methods and Ways wherein they expressed this Enmity and bitterness of Spirit that was so fixed in them, both by Word and Deed: Yea, moreover, the very Causes from whence all the former did spring; as also the sad Effects which was like to follow, or be the reward of such Spirits and Doings.

The critical observation of all which, when well searched out, might be that no small use in all Ages to all Men; for there is no New Thing under the Sun, saith Solomon, Eccles. 1. 9.

Of these in their order: And first of the Evidences and Instances which the Scripture hath given and noted; Of the First, (to wit,) That the seated Enmity in the Hearts of the wicked, and their bitterness against God himself, Christ, his Followers, the Saints of God, the Laws of God, Holiness

Geo. Gregory 2. 13. '33 Cx. 311 # 60 1/2 (272)

ness it self, and the Light thereof; the Light which did shine in Christ himself, the Saints and followers of Christ; which Enmity the Holy Ghost did fore-tell, *Gen. 3. 15.* should arise between the Seed of the Serpent and the Seed of the Woman; and accordingly it soon appeared, when *Cain* from that Principle, slew his Brother *Abel*, *Gen. 4. 8.* The Prophet *Habakkuk*, in his time, noted, *Chap. 1. 13.* That the wicked devoured the Man that was more righteous than he. The Apostles also asserts, that in those days also, 'twas so in the general, *Gal. 4. 29.* As he who was born after the Flesh, persecuted him who was born after the Spirit; so (saith he there,) it is now, that is, in those days: By which they then did evidence the highest Heart-Enmity imaginable.

And this Heart-Enmity, the Holy Ghost hath throughout the Old and New Testament frequently, in especial manner observed. No sooner had the Enemies of the Jews, in *Nehemiab's* days, *Nehem. 2.* received Intelligence, that *Nehemiab* was come with Authority to build the Walls of *Jerusalem*, *v. 8. 9.* But 'tis said, *v. 10.* That it grieved them exceedingly, that there was come a Man to seek the welfare of the Children of Israel; their envious Hearts here boiled within them of it; when there was one good Prophet in *Israel*, *Micajah* by name, wicked *Ahab* said of him, *1 Kings. 22. 8.* I hate him. Such was his seated Enmity against him there, that he could not, in that time, forbear openly to declare it upon the very naming of him. The Psalmist also testifieth, that in his time it was so; *The wicked in wrath,* or (as the Margent hath it,) *with an intestine hatred,* (saith he,) *hateth me,* *Pl. 55. v. 3.* And *Psal. 64. 4.* He complains of the numerousness of these two, in these words, *They who hate me without a Cause, are more than the Hairs of my Head.* Of which Enmity also, the Prophet *Amos* takes notice, in the general in his days; *They hate* (saith he,) *rebuke in the Gate, and they abhor him who speaketh uprightly,* *Amos 5. 10.* They there could not endure Verbal Rebuks, nor the convincing Life of an upright Man, their Hearts abhorred them both. So afterwards, in New Testament days, they testified their fixed Enmity, Hatred and Rancour, which was seated in their Minds against Christ himself, and against all who did own Him or his Laws: As Christ in the Parable before mentioned, *Luke 19.* did hint that the Jews did, when he there said of the Noble Man, *v. 14.* His Citizens hated him; and down-rightly tells him by their Messenger there, *We will not have this Man to reign over us;* there they declared their Heart-hatred against him and his Government in the general, and consequently against all who owned him, and submitted themselves to his Laws; they hated the Light which shone in him, them, and it; as Christ himself expressly said, *John 3.* That they hated the Light; *v. 19. 20.* Light is come into the World, (saith he there,) and Men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil; for every one that doth evil hateth the Light, lest his Deeds should be discovered: And this Christ told his unbelieving Brethren, *John 7. 7.* The World cannot hate you, but me it hateth, because I testify of it. Nay, their hatred of Christ was so evident and well known, that *Pilate* himself had taken notice of it, *Mark 15. 13.* 'tis said of him there, That he knew, that the Chief Priests had delivered Christ to be Crucified for Envy. Of which the Hearts of the unbelieving Jews were full; which also Christ did beforehand inform his Disciples of, that they might be prepared to meet with the Effects thereof, *John 15. 18, 19.* in these words, If the World hate you, ye know that it hated me first, before it hated you, &c. I have chosen you out of the World, therefore the World hateth you; here they hated Christ and others also, because they followed him, and bore his image; yea, further, saith Christ there, *v. 24.* of the same Chap. Now have they both seen, and hated both me and my Father: Again, *John 17. 14.* he said of his Disciples, The world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, &c. Thus did Christ, again and again, inculcate this, which afterwards they found true, as the Scripture also hath noted, *Acts 5. 17, 18.* 'tis said, That the High Priests, and those who were with him, rose up, and were filled with Indignation or Envy, and laid their hands on the Apostles. The like Spirit the Jews discovered, *Act. 13.* when they there saw the multitude, *v. 45.* They were filled with Envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul; their Hearts here were full of Envy and Hatred both against the Apostles

sties and their Doctrin: Again, *Act. 17.* 'tis said, *That the Jews, who believed not, being moved with Envy, took unto them certain law'd Fellows of the baser sort, and made an uprore, &c.* And *Paul* doth acknowledge of himself, *Act. 26.* *That he, when he was yet an unbeliever, was also exceeding mad against the followers of Christ, v. 9. I verily thought with my self, that I ought to do many things contrary to the Name of Jesus; and in v. 11. Being exceeding mad against them, I persecuted them to strange Cities.* And herein was verified that which *Christ* had said, *John 16. 1, 2, 3.* *That some should think that they did God good service, in killing his Followers.* So far did *Paul's* blind Zeal then transport him, *That it filled his heart with madness against them.* So far were some of the *Jews* carried in this Enmity, *That when Judas repented, and told them that he had betrayed Innocent Blood, they say, what is that to us? (tho they rejoiced, and had given him Money to do it, Mark 14. 10, 11.) and they afterwards put Christ to death, Mar. 27. 34, 35, &c.* Yea, most desperately did they say, (when *Pilate* acquitted himself of that Innocent Blood,) *His Blood be upon Us and our Children, v. 24. 25. of the same Chap.* Thus hath the Holy Ghost recorded this Enmity, that was naturally seated and fixed in the Hearts of the Sons of Men, and evidenced by them in those days.

2dly. As to the various *Ways* and *Methods* these invidious Ones walked in and took, towards and against the *Saints*, against *Christ* himself and his Followers; Or how these wicked Ones did in those Ages of the World, express this their seated Enmity, Hatred, and Bitterness against them; or, which way it did evidence it self to be in them: The Scripture hath also plainly taken notice of; some of which were as followeth.

First, They were studious and diligent by all means imaginable, to *defame* and *disgrace* the *Saints* before *Christ* was manifest in the *Flesh*, and afterwards to *defame* and *disgrace* *Him* and his *Followers*, and to render their Persons and Doctrins *base* and *contemprible* in the Eyes and Opinions of others, especially of the *Greek Ones*, thereby to prevent the spreading of the *Gospel*, and to stir up the Minds of others to be evilly affected against the *Saints*, *Christ* himself, and his *Followers*, yea, and against the Doctrin of the *Gospel*, and Rules of Holiness it self.

For the effecting of which, They *speak evil* of them in the general, and in their ordinary Discourse, and sometimes, by charging and accusing them in particular, with great Crimes and Enormities which they could not prove: And first in the general in their ordinary Discourse, as the *Psalmist* saith, *Psal. 5. 19, 20.* of the wicked there, *Their Tongue frames deceit; thou sittest and speakest against thy Brother, thou slanderest thine own Mothers Son:* Again, *Psal. 64. 2, 3, 4.* *They whet their Tongues like a Sword, bend their bow to shoot their Arrows, even bitter Words, that they might shoot in secret at the perfect, &c.* They thus endeavored to wound them in their Reputations, and to bring them into contempt amongst the *Vulgar*, who had heard their Speeches of this dealing; the *Psalmist* complains before *God, Psal. 94. 3.* *Lord, how long (saith he,) shall the wicked triumph, shall they utter and speak hard things.* The Holy Ghost in the New Testament too, takes notice hereof, *Act. 28.* The *Jews* there acknowledged to *Paul*, that 'twas ordinary for them to speak against the followers of *Christ*, in these words, *v. 22.* *This Sect we know, is every where spoken against; they were reproached as a Sect, and their Doctrin derided in the common Discourse among the unbelieving Jews, every where, in those days.*

What kind of Speeches these were, (as to many of them) the Scripture doth also in particular record, as in that of *Mat. 11. 18, 19.* *John came neither eating nor drinking, and they said he hath a Devil. The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they said, behold, a Man gluttonous, a Wine-bibber, a friend of Publicans and Sinners.* Eat or not eat, they still speak evil of them, and all to prevent others from having any good Opinion of them or their Doctrins; so, when they perceived that the People began to be amazed at what *Christ* had done, *Mat. 12. 23.* The Pharisees hearing thereof, *v. 24.* said of *Christ*, *This Fellow doth not cast out Devils, but by Beelzebub the Prince of Devils; this they did, that none should value him upon the account of the Miracles he*

did: Again, The Pharisees, *Mat. 27.* gave him no better a Title than the Deceiver; *We remember* (said they there,) *v. 62 & 63.* *That the Deceiver said, whilst he was yet alive, &c.* So *John* the 7th, when some had said, *He is a good Man, v. 12.* others said, *Nay, but he deceiveth the People;* yea, his own Countrymen, *Mat. 13.* tho they there were astonished at Christs Wisdom and his mighty Works; *v. 54.* yet, the same Persons, in the following verses, endeavor to lessen him, and what he said and did; *Is not this* (say they,) *the Carpenters Son? is not his Mother called Mary, &c. And they were offended in him, v. 57.* So did they usually speak contemptuously of him, as in *Luke 23. 2.* *We found this fellow perverting the Nation, &c.* And *John 9. 29.* *As for this Fellow, we know not from whence he is;* yea, they endeavored to insinuate this Persuasion into the People, in the 16th verse of the same Chap. that Christ was not of God; some of the Pharisees there said, *This Man is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath:* And further, he having cured the blind Man afterwards, in the same Chap. and they could not deny it; they in *v. 24.* said, *Give God the glory, this Man is a sinner:* And again, *John 10. 20.* *Many of them said, he hath a Devil, he is mad, why bear ye him?* In like manner, *John 7,* when they perceived that the Officers had Christ in admiration, *v. 46.* and had said there, *Never Man spake like this Man;* the Pharisees, in the next verses, answered them, saying, *Are ye also deceived; have any of the Rulers believed on him; But this People who know not the Law, are accursed:* And *v. 52.* they said unto *Nichodemus, Art thou also of Galilee?* In all those Expressions of theirs, they did endeavor to insinuate this into the Peoples Minds, that Christ was so contemptible a Person, and all that he did was so little to be regarded, that no Ruler or Pharisee, Men of any Note, did account him worthy to be believed, or had in any esteem; and that none but ignorant and accursed People, would value him, or any thing he did; and thereby, they hoped to engage the People to slight him, and his Doctrin too. After the same manner, did they frequently speak concerning the Apostles and their Doctrin, to disgrace them and it amongst the People; *Acts 13.* The Jews there, had no sooner perceived that the People began to flock together to hear the Gospel, *v. 44.* *But they were filled with Envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.* In the following verses, again, *Acts 19.* 'tis said, When he had preached the Word for some time, *v. 8.* *Divers were hardened and believed not, but spake evil of that Way before the multitude, v. 9.* By which means, doubtless, they did stir up the Minds of Men against the Apostles and their Doctrins; for 'tis said, *Acts 14. 2.* *That the unbelieving Jews did stir up the Gentiles, and made their minds evilly affected against the Brethren;* and *v. 19.* *They persuaded the people, and having stoned Paul, &c.* And again, *Acts 17. 13.* *They there stirred up the People;* this must needs be by representing them as ill Men, and their Doctrin as evil, in the Ears of the People. There were certain Philosophers, *Acts 18.* who (when Paul had disputed with the Jews,) took this way too, *v. 17.* said they of Paul there, *What will this babler (or base Fellow) say? other some said, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods:* And again, *Acts 22.* Having nothing in particular to charge him with, they in *v. 22.* (that they might engage the Magistrates and People against him, by a loud Out-cry against him as a Monster,) they are said there, *To lift up their voices, and say away with such a Fellow from the Earth: for it is not fit that he should live.* And to speak evil of all such who owned Christ, was (it seemeth,) a common thing among them; for Pauls Countrymen said to him, *Acts 28. 22.* *As concerning this Sect, we know that every where it is spoken against:* And Peter also hints this, *1 Pet. 3. 16.* when he adviseth the Christian there, to have a good Conscience, he subjoined this, *That whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil doers, they may be ashamed, who did falsely accuse your good Conversation in Christ;* so Christs words implies, *Mat. 5.* when he said *v. 11.* *Blessed ye, when Men shall revile you, &c. and shall say all manner of evil against you, for my sake.* Thus the Scripture declare fully, that wicked Men did express their Heart-Enmity against the Saints, Christ himself, and his Followers, by defaming and disgracing of them and their Doctrin; thereby to bring them into Contempt, and evil Esteem amongst the People, and render their Doctrin of no force.

And

And idly, These wicked Ones, Unbelievers, (that they might seem unto all Men to be very just and righteous in all that which they did, and that they did require nothing but the due execution of the Law upon those whom they persecuted,) did not rest in a speaking evil of the Saints in the general, as before, but proceeded further (and that without any sense of Honesty or Religion,) to render them highly Criminal, (tho most unjustly and falsely,) by accusing and charging of them as guilty of the most heinous Crimes; as Enemies to Kings, Governors and Government, as Rebels, Traytors, Seditious, Factions, breakers of the Kings Laws, and the Law of God too; breakers of the Peace, Deceivers, Ring leaders of Heresies, and such like, which they could never prove; and this they did usually in those days, before Magistrates and among the People; and not only so, but they did use many Artifices to insinuate into the Peoples Minds, and also into the Rulers, to persuade them fully to believe, that those Accused Ones were really guilty of those things their Persecutors then charged them with, and thereby both Magistrates and People were the easier drawn to assist the Persecutors; all which the same Scripture also hath fully noted: As in *John* 18. when Christ there had been brought by them before *Pilate*, and he had asked them, What Accusation they had against him, *v. 29.* They said unto him, *v. 30.* *If he were not a Malefactor, we would not have delivered him up to thee;* No doubt, they would have been thought by *Pilate* and those present, to have been so just, (tho they could prove nothing against Christ,) that they must believe them barely upon their confident saying so, without more ado; and that *Pilate* ought not to think otherwise, when they had brought Christ before him, but that he must be a Malefactor, and not Innocent. The *Psalmist* in his days, complains, *Psal. 38.* in general, *They (saith he there,) who seek my hurt, speak mischievous things, and imagin deceit all the day long, v. 12.* And *Psal. 31. 13.* *I have heard the Slanders of many, &c.* Particular instances hereof are noted throughout the divine Records, as in *Exod. 1.* The King of Egypt there (having a mind to prevent the *Israelites* growth, and to suppress them,) *v. 9.* he suggests this against them, as if they had *Rebellious* and *Trayterous* Principles in them, *v. 10.* in these words, *Come, let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply, and it come to pass that when we have war, they join also unto our Enemies, and fight against us, &c.* So did that wicked King *Abah*, *1 Kings 18.* (when his own great wickedness, mentioned *1 Kings 16. 30, 31, &c.* had procured the sore Famine, prophesied of by *Elijah*, *Chap. 17. 1.* he having sought *Elijah* every where to kill him, *v. 10.* upon sight of him, he presently charged him for being the Troubler of *Israel*; in these words, *v. 17.* *Art thou he who troubles Israel?* this was a most unjust Charge, as *Elijah* then and there told him, in the next verse, in these words, *I have not troubled Israel; but thou and thy Fathers House, in that ye have forsaken the Commandments of the Lord, &c.* The Enemies of the Jews, in *Ezra's* time, did so against them, in *Ezra 4.* They there wrote Accusations against them; the Chancellor and some other Great Ones, wrote to the King in these words, *v. 12.* and so on, *Be it known unto the King, That if this City be builded, and the Walls set up again, then they will not pay Tole, Tribute and Custom; and so thou shalt endamage the Revenues of the Kings; know that this City is a Rebellious City, and hurtful to Kings and Provinces, and that they have moved Seditions within the same of old time:* Here were these charged to be a *Rebellious*, *Seditious*, and *disloyal* People; by which suggestion, (tho never so false,) they got Authority to stay the Work, *v. 21.* In like manner, did they in *Nebemiahs* time, *Nebem. 2.* when he came with Authority from the King to rebuild *Jerusalem*, *v. 8, 9, 10.* *Sanballat* and others having heard on't, *v. 19.* they said to them, *What is the thing that ye do? will ye rebel against the King?* Here they presently suggested a Design of *Rebellion*; tho, what they were about at that time, they did by the Kings own Authority. And again, *Sanballat*, *Chap. 6.* sent to *Nebemiah* a Letter, in these words, *v. 5, 6, 7.* *It is reported amongst the Heathens, and Gashum saith; thou and the Jews think to rebel; for which cause thou buildest the Wall, that thou mayst be their King, according to these words; and thou hast appointed Prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying, a King in Judah; than all which, there was nothing*

nothing more untrue, as *Nebemiah* did tell him, *v. 8.* said he there, *There is no such thing done as thou said, but thou faimest them out of thine own heart*: Heinous desperate Enmity he had in his Breast against *Mordchai*, put him upon taking this Course against him, and against all the *Jews*, the easier to bring about their destruction; he accuseth the *Jews* before the King; *Hester 3.* in these words, *v. 8. & 9.* *There is a certain People scattered abroad, &c. and their Laws are divers from all people, neither keep they the Kings Laws; That it is not for the Kings profit to suffer them; Let it be written, that they may be destroyed*; By which Suggestion and false Charge, he procured a Decree to destroy them, in the next verses. Thus also did the Presidents and Princes in *Daniels* time; their Enmity was so great against *Daniel*, *That* (having on purpose, *Dan. 4. 4, 5.* and following verses, procured a Law in the matter of his God, they not being able otherwise to accuse him, and prove any fault against him,) *they go to the King*, in *v. 13.* and charge *Daniel*, in these words, in the presence of the King, *Daniel*, (said they,) *regardeth not thee, O King, nor the Decree which thou hast signed, &c.* Here did they insinuate, that he was a Contemner of the King, and of his Decrees; when as in truth it was nothing so, but only a due regard to the true God, on whom he was bound to call. The *Jews* likewise, who believed not in Christ, in his time and afterwards, trod in the same Steps; they charged Christ himself with such Crimes. *Luke 23. 2.* *They began to accuse him before Pilate, saying, We found this Fellow perverting the Nation, and forbidding to give Tribute to Cæsar, saying, that he himself is Christ, a King*; and in *v. 5.* *He stirred up the people, teaching throughout all Jury*, and *v. 10.* *The chief Priests and Scribes stood up, and vehemently accused him*; Here this most holy and just One, came under an Accusation of being guilty of Treason, Sedition, and of being notoriously Criminal; and was vehemently accused too; that they might vent their Envy and Malice against him, with the greatest shew of Justice; for they were tender of their own Reputation in that, as appeared, when Christ had said unto them, *John 10. 32.* *Many good Works I have shewed you, &c. for which of these Works do you stone me?* They in the next verse answered him, in these words, *For a good Work we stone thee not, but for Blasphemy, and because thou being a Man, make thy self a God.* They would not be thought to shed Innocent Blood, which made them to storm at the Apostles afterwards; when they had preached Christ as the Just One, whom the unbelieving *Jews* had Crucified, *Act. 5.* *Did not we* (say they,) *v. 28.* *charge you, that you should not teach in this Name, and behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your Doctrine, and intend to bring this Mans Blood on us*; tho they were really guilty on't, and doubtless conscious to themselves on't too; yet would not they have others conceive such a thought of them. So dealt they with *Stephen*, *Act. 6.* when they could not resist the Spirit and Wisdom, by which he spake, *v. 10.* they then in the next verse, charge him with speaking of Blasphemy, which also was notoriously false; for there the Scripture saith, *That they suborned Men who said so of him*; the same way did the South-sayers take too, *Act. 16.* when *Paul* there had cast out the evil Spirit, *v. 18.* *They v. 19.* *caught Paul and Syllas, and brought them to the Magistrates*; and in the next verses, they charged them, in these words, *These Men being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our City, and teach Customs which are not lawful for us to receive, neither observe, being Romans*; all which the Magistrates and People presently believing to be true, without any further enquiry, fell upon *Paul*, &c. verses *22, 23.* So did the unbelieving *Jews* with *Jason*, and certain Brethren, *Act. 17.* when they had brought them to the Rulers, *v. 6.* they in the same verses, and *v. 7.* charge them as guilty of Treason, breach of Laws, and disturbance of the Peace too, in these words, *These have turned the world upside down, &c. these do all contrary to the Decrees of Cæsar, saying, That there is another King Jesus*; Here did they make false construction of their Doctrine; they preached Jesus to be the Christ, a King; therefore would they force it to intend against Cæsar: And again, *Act. 18.* did they so with *Paul*; the *Jews* there *v. 12.* made an *Insurrection*, with one accord, against *Paul*, and brought him to the Judgment-seat; and there they charge him, in these words, *v. 13.* *This Fellow persuaded Men to worship God contrary to Law*; and again, *In the Temple they laid hold on him, Act. 21. 27, 28.* They

cried

cried out, *Men of Israel help, this is the Man who teacheth all Men every where, against the People, and the Law, and this Place, and brought Greeks into the Temple and polluted this holy place; at which the People were presently moved, easily believed all the Charge; and they took Paul, v. 30. and would have killed him, as in the following verse, altho no part of the Accusation was true: And again, Act. 24. The High Priest and Elders took Tertullus an Orator, with them, v. 2. that they might charge Paul more effectually, and with more facility get the Governors Ear; and when they were there before the Governor, they, by their Orator, loaded Paul with the guilt of great Crimes, v. 5, 6. in these words, *We have found this Man a pestilent Fellow, and a mover of Sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a Ring-leader of the Sect of Nazarene, who also hath gone about to profane the Temple;* a great Charge without any colour of Truth, as Paul afterwards in his Defence declared, and said also, *Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me, v. 12, 13. But this, (said he,) I confess, after the way they call Hereſe, ſo worſhip I the God of my Fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and the Prophets;* and this indeed was his only Crime, for which they ſo persecuted him. They yet further pursued him before Festus, Act. 25. *The Jews there stood round about Paul, and laid many and grievous Complaints against him, which they could not prove, v. 7. And Paul answered, v. 8. Neither (said he,) against the Law of the Jews, neither against the Temple, nor yet against Cæſar, have I offended in any thing at all;* yet his Innocency could not excuse him from their violent Persecuting of him, because of the Heart-Enmity they had against him. Thus hath the Scripture noted, That the Enemies of good Men, and Goodness it self, in the Ages of the World, did follow the Steps one of another, in manifesting their Heart-Enmity against them and it; by charging them with many and notorious Crimes every where; to the end, that the Enemies own Proceedings might seem to be just, and only a Legal Persecution of Malefactors, nor a malicious pursuit of Innocents; and that they might bring Christ and good Men, into the ill Opinion both of the People, and of the Magistrates, the easier to prevail with them to assist in the Persecution.*

3dly. A third way that these envious Ones were found in, and which these divine Records have also observed, was, That they watched and sought for Advantages to take hold of something, whereof to accuse Christ and the Saints; yea, they did frequently tempt them to speak, by asking ensnaring Questions, and ordering of others so to do, in order to the framing of an Accusation against them; and did oft times wrest their Words too. As the Prophet Isaiah complaining, saying, *19. 20. All who watch for iniquity are cut off, who make a Man an offender for a word, and layeth a snare for him who reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of naught.* Therefore the Prophet Amos adviseth, *That the prudent should keep silent in such an evil time, Chap. 5. 12, 13.* And the Psalmist resolved so to do, in his time, *Psal. 39. 1. (said he there,) I will keep my mouth with a Bridle, while the wicked is before me;* so well acquainted was he with the usual way of the wicked in this matter. Thus did they do with Daniel, because the King had advanced him above the Presidents and Princes, *Dan. 6. 1, 2, 3, 4. They sought occasion against him in the matters of the Kingdom, but they found none;* fain would they have accused him, could they have found any Matter which they sought for. The Psalmist in his days, too, found these Attempts made upon him, *Psal. 38. 12. (said he,) They also who seek my life, lay snares for me, and they imagin deceits all the day long;* and in *Psal. 119. 69. The proud hath forged a lie against me;* again, in *Psal. 56. v. 5, 6. Every day they wrest my words; all their thoughts against me for evil, they mark my steps, when they wait for my Soul;* thus they commonly did every day, (said he): After the same manner did the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles deal with Christ and his Followers, in those days, *Mat. 12. 10. they there tempted Christ, There was a man who had his hand withered, and they asked Christ, saying, is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day? that they might accuse him;* here they waited, and by a question tempts Christ to speak, that they might catch something of Matter of Accusation: Again, the Priests and Elders, as he was teaching, *Mat. 21. 23. said, By what au-*

thority dost thou these things? and who gave thee this authority? Here doubtless, they hoped for an answer, which they might have interpreted, to have carried in it some affront to Magistrates and Government, whereof they might have accused him; wherefore Christ refused to give them any direct answer: And more expressly, as said in the next Chap. v. 14. *That the Scribes and Pharisees, went and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk; and in order hereto, they in the next verse, sent out some to him, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, &c. neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the persons of men; tell us therefore, what thinkest thou, is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar or not?* Here, no doubt, they expected some words from him, out of which they might have picked some Treason; which, by their way of Addressing themselves to him, they thought they might have drawn him too; which wicked Design of theirs, Christ well perceived, as 'tis said, v. 18. by him, *Why tempt ye me, &c.* Then Christ bid them give to Caesar the things which are Caesars, v. 21, 22. Again, Luke 6. 7. *The Scribes and Pharisees watched him whether he would heal on the Sabbath day, that they might find an accusation against him; yea, they are said, Luke 11. 53. To have urged him vehemently, and to have provoked him to speak many things, laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him;* so incessant were they in their pursuit of Christ, whom they hated and would have destroyed. And further, the Evangelist Luke, Chap. 20. saith, *They watched him, and sent forth spies, who should fail themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him into the power and authority of the Governor, v. 20.* Here they thought surely, that Christ would be more free to talk with just Men, and speak that to them, which he would not bear to do before others; that so they might ensnare him, by insinuating Dissentions, and thereupon accuse him; yet again, did they set upon him, John 8. 3. *They set before him a Woman taken in Adultery; and said to him, v. 5. Moses said, that such should be stoned, but what sayst thou? This they said, (as in the next verse,) tempting him, that they might have to accuse him;* which Christ also perceived, as in the following verses. So far also doth the Scripture take notice of this Way, which those wicked and invidious Ones in those days took, to express their Heart-hatred against the Saints, and against Christ himself.

4thly. Another Way and Method wherein they proceeded against the Saints, Christ and his Followers, and against the Truth, to suppress them and it, and stop their growth, was this, They called Councils, consulted together, devised, plotted and contrived Mischief against them in secret, and how they might effect their Ends, as the Scripture hath Recorded; King Pharaoh, Exod. 1. when he had perceived the *Israelites* to encrease, and he had a mind to prevent their growth, v. 9. he consulted with his People, and said, *Come, let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply, &c.* v. 10. then in the following verses, they put Burthens on them heavier and heavier; but when that would not do, he devised to slay the Male Children, and charged the Midwives so to do; and charged also his People to cast the Sons of the *Hebrews* into the River. So did their Enemies in *Nebemiabs* days, Chap. 4. when they had heard that the Walls were built, they contrived all ways to prevent their further progress; First, they mock them, saying, *What do these feeble Jews do? will they fortifie themselves, v. 2. but when they saw that that would not do, 'tis said, v. 7, 8. That they were then very wroth, and conspired all of them together, to come and fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder the work;* alho what the *Jews* did, was by Authority from the King. In like manner did they in *Exra's* days, Chap. 4. When the Adversaries of *Judah*, &c. had heard that they builded the Temple, v. 1. they v. 2. came and pretended that they would build with them; this was their first Plot to weaken their hands in their Building; but when that would not do, they contrived, in the 4th and 5th verses, and hired Counsellors against them, to frustrate their Progress all the days of *Cyrus*; and afterwards, v. 8. the Chancellor and Scribe, and the rest, consulted and wrote to the King a Charge against them of high Nature, as in the following verses, which effected their Design, and staid the Work, v. 21. so industrious were those in their Counsils and

and Contrivances, to hinder that Work which they hated. **Human** plotted the ruin of all the Jews, because **Mordecai** did not bow to to him: he devised a course in his heart, and accordingly proceeded **Ester**, Chap. 3. Of such doings, the **Plaintiff** in his days complained to God, **Psal.** 35. 7. *Without cause* (saith he there) *they have hid from me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my Soul;* and in the 15th verse, *The objects gathered themselves together, but they devise deceitful matters against them who are just in the Land;* the **Plaintiff** had taken special notice, that wicked Men in his days, did usually contrive evil against such who were innocent and peaceable in the Land: And **Psal.** 38. he saith, *But they also who sought his life, did lay snares for him, and they did smite together against him, v. 11. Again, **Psal.** 21. 12. Fear (saith he,) was on every side, whilst they took Counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life, and so (saith he) they did against others too. **Psal.** 52. 1. *They intended themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and consumed the innocent Blood:* thus did they in that day, consult how they might take away the life of men whom they hated, and how they might do it with the greatest ease, secrecy, and security to themselves they could. The **Plaintiff** yet further spreads this before God, **Psal.** 83. *Be not still, O God, (saith he,) v. 1. Why, what is the matter? Why, saith he, in the next verses, Lo, that Enemy make a tumult, and they have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones; they have said, Come, let us cut them off from being a Nation, that the name of Israel be no more remembered: for they have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee,* it is noted too, that the Priests and Princes in **Daniels** time, did take the same way with him, **Dan.** 6. When they saw the King had advanced him over them, verses 1, 2, 3. they in the next verses, because they could not find occasion against him in the Matters of the Kingdom, which they had sought to do, they contrived and contrived to enquire him in the Matter of his God, v. 4. and accordingly, they, in the next verses, pursued the thing they had contrived, procured a Law in that Matter, and convicted him thereupon. After the same manner did the unbelieving Jews, and the Gentiles too, in those days, contrive against Christ and his Followers, as it is written, **Mat.** 12. when Christ had, v. 13. healed the withered Hand, *The Pharisees, in the next verse, went on, and held a Council against him, how they might destroy him;* again, after Christ had spoken to them in a Parable, **Mat.** 22. 15. *They went and took counsel, how they might kill him;* and afterwards, in the next verses, they pursued their Contrivances, to **Mat.** 26. 1. *They all left him, and went away, and the Elders of the people, into the Palace of the High Priest, and they might take security, subtilly, and kill him, in verses 2, 3, 4.* The like Council they took again, **Mat.** 27. 1. *to put him to death.* Here the wicked Men amongst the Jews, were frequently in taking counsel how they might have destroyed this innocent and just one: but when they heard of him, Nay, when he had raised Lazarus, and so forth, they were so terrified, they could not deny it, **John.** 11. 47. *They said, What do we? for let this man alone, all which will believe on him, v. 50. to prevent which, they were most industriously engaged.* They did the like amongst the Apostles, when these had preached Christ, **Acts.** 5. *They were cut to the heart, and they took counsel to slay the Apostles, v. 12. when Paul had given over to persecute the Church, v. 13. he sought Christ, v. 14. and took counsel to kill him too.* And when they could not do this, they took counsel together, and bound Stephen under a Curse, **Acts.** 7. 54. *And when they had agreed with the Elders, and Scribes, and Rulers, they sought to kill him, v. 55.* Thus hath the Scripture declared and set forth, the several Contrivances, plots, and wicked Devices, that these wicked envious Ones in those Ages of the world, had made and designed against Christ, good and peaceable Men, according to that, **Psal.** 52. 1. *They took counsel against the Lord and his Anointed, &c. v. 2. &c.**

5thly: A fifth Way that those envious Ones, Unbelievers, &c. did take; in those days, to express their Enmity against Gods People, Christ and his Followers, was this. They did procure, and Enact Laws and Decrees Civil and Ecclesiastical, on purpose both to enslave, punish and destroy them: And to deter others from owning and following of them or their Doctrins; and under colour of such Laws or Decrees, they did proceed to accuse them as disobedient, and so punish them thereupon; as the Psalmist, *Psal. 94.* intimated, that they did in his days, *Shall the Throne of Iniquity (saith he,) v. 20. have fellowship with thee: who frame mischief by a Law?* And what they did upon these Laws, is expressed in the next verse, in these words, *They gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and condemn innocent blood:* The Holy Ghost takes notice on't here, that altho they seemed to do it by a Legal Process, yet 'twas the Righteous, 'twas innocent Blood, they condemned thereby, as *Jezebel* the Wife of *Abah*, did with innocent *Naboth*, *1 Kings. 21.* when she had seen *Abah* discontent about the Vineyard, *v. 5, 6.* she resolved to dispatch *Naboth* out of the way, and that by colour of Law too; as 'tis said there, *v. 7.* she said to *Abah*, *Dost thou not govern the Kingdom of Israel? Let this bear be merry: I will give thee the Vineyard of Naboth, &c.* In order to which, she *v. 8.* wrote Letters in *Abahs* name, and sealed it with his Seal, and sent the same to the Elders and the Nobles of the City, where *Naboth* dwelt; and by that Letter, in the next verses, directs them to proceed against him in a Judicial way, but to set up false Witnesses against him; to which the Nobles and Elders (reasoning themselves secure, having the Kings Commandment for it, did comply, tho the way was desperately wicked; they set up Witnesses, Sons of Belial against him, judged, condemned and executed him, in the *11, 12,* and following verses. The Enemies of the Jews did, by false suggestions against them, procure a Decree from the King to stop their work of Building, in *Ezra 4.* *Nebucadnezzar* the King, having set up an Image, *Dan. 3.* and in the following verses, Decreed, *That all who heard the sound of the Cornet, &c. should fall down and worship him, and that such who did not, should be cast into the fiery Furnace;* upon this, the *Caldeans, v. 8.* accused the Jews, and *v. 12.* they said, *These Men, O King, regard not thee, they serve not thy gods;* upon which the King in great fury sent for them, *v. 13.* and *v. 19.* in greater wrath commanded the Execution of them, according to that Law; which in the following verses they performed: Here was a wicked Law or Decree, and upon this they condemned those innocent and peaceable Men. And thus they dealt with *Daniel* himself too, in those days; *The Presidents and Princes* (who had hated him,) having sought occasion against him in the matters of the Kingdom, and found none; could not hit him upon any Law in that respect; such was his Faithfulness, and so good a Subject was he, *Dan. 6. 4, 5.* They contrived a Law or Decree, on purpose, in the Master of his God, that upon this they might ruin him; 'tis said, *v. 7.* *That all the Presidents of the Kingdom, and the Governors, and the Princes, the Counsellors, and the Captains, had consulted together to establish a Royal Statute, to make a firm Decree, That whosoever shall ask, &c.* and in the next verse, they obtain a Confirmation thereof by the King, upon which they, *v. 11.* and so onward, prosecuted *Daniel* for praying to the true God, and cast him into the Den of Lyons, (tho the Kings Heart was to deliver him); thus did they there frame this Law, and yet it confirmed upon this sole Design, that they might take *Daniel* in the Master of his God, and to dispatch him. So did *Haman* also with the Jews in *Mordacays* days, when he had resolved to have destroyed both *Mordcai* and the Jews, he applied himself to the King for a Decree to destroy them, which he obtained, and accordingly proceeded upon it till he was prevented, *Ester 4. 6, 8.* and following verses. After the same manner the Jews themselves did in Christs time, under pretence of Law, they persecuted Jesus himself unto death, they brought him before *Pilate* the Judge, in open Court, and there charged him, and prosecuted him in a pretended regular way, *Luke 23.* Yea, and that they might terrify others from confessing and owning of him in the World at that time, they made or agreed an Ecclesiastical Law too, That any did confess him, they should be Excommunicated; as 'tis expressly said, *John 9. 22.*

in these words, *That the Jews had already agreed, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, that he should be put out of the Synagogue*; of which Law the Jews at that time stood in great fear, as is plain by the Parents of the blind Man, there spoken of in this Chap. they answered so shyly when the question was asked them concerning their Son, for fear of this Law of Excommunication, which they did afterwards actually put in Execution against their Son when he owned Christ, v. 24. And 'tis expressly said, *John 7. That many said, he is a good man*, v. 12. *Howbeit, no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews*, v. 13. And again, *John 12. v. 42.* 'tis said, *Among the chief Rulers also many believed on him, but because of the Pharisees, they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the Synagogue*; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God; of which Law and the execution thereof, Christ had told his Disciples, *Before, Jo. 16. verse, they will put you out of their Synagogues, they will execute those Laws they have contrived on purpose to prevent mens confessing of me.* Thus doth the Scripture Records evidence, that the wicked Ones in those Ages, did take this Course also to prevent and deten Men from owning God, and Christ, and his Laws.

6thly, Yet a sixth Way wherein they did evidence their Enmity against God and Christ, against the Saints and followers of Christ, was this, That when they otherwise could not, in a Legal Way, make out any of the Accusations and Charges they had brought against them; and being resolved to take them, they then did suborn, and set up false Witnesses, Men of Belial, to swear against them, and affirm even whatever they had suggested to them; to whom the Magistrates in those days, did easily give credit too, as the Scripture declared; That the Elders and Nobles by *Jezebel* means, did in the case of *Naboth*, *1 Kings. 21.* when *Jezebel* there had written to them in the Kings Name, and under his Seal, (tho without his knowledge,) v. 8. and therein directed them, v. 9, & 10. to set up *Naboth* on high among the People, and to set up false witnesses; They, in v. 11, 12, 13. accordingly set up *Naboth*; and 'tis said there, *There came in two men, children of Belial, and witnessed against him, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the King*; which they the Elders and Nobles, soon gave credit too, for they presently carried him out and stoned him; here they shed innocent Blood, by false suborned Witnesses, as they were commanded to do; tho they knew it to be a desperate wicked thing so to do. The Psalmist in his days, complained of such dealings, *Psal. 119. 69.* and said there, *The proud hath forged a lie against me*; and in *Psal. 35. 11.* he said, *False witnesses did arise up, they laid to my charge things which I knew not.* After the same manner did the unbelieving Jews deal with Jesus Christ himself, and with his Disciples, in their days; as the Scripture also affirmeth, *Mat. 26. 13* is said there, v. 59. *That the chief Priests and Elders, and all the Council, sought false witnesses against Jesus to put him to death*; and v. 60, and 61. *At last came two false witnesses, and said, Thou Fellow said, &c.* Thus the Holy Ghost takes notice, that the Chief Priests, Elders and Council, were principally engaged in this wickedness too; such was their Heart Enmity against him, that they could not bear with his being on the Earth; therefore they regarded not what wicked Course they took to send him hence. So did the Libertines and others, in the case of *Stephen*, *Act. 6.* *When they were not able to resist his wisdom, &c. v. 10. They then in the next verses suborned men, who said we have heard him speak Blasphemies, &c.* and afterwards, v. 12, & 13. *they set up those false witnesses before the Council against him.* This Charge they had framed against him, and endeavored to prove, (tho by false Witnesses, by Perjury,) that they might seem to be just, and so persecute him in a Legal manner, according to *Moses Law*, and so put him to death; for in the next verses, *They set up the Elders and Scribes, and People, (who were forward enough of themselves against him,) and took him, brought him before the Council,* where they produced their suborned Men, who said of him, *That this man ceased not to speak blasphemous words against the holy Place and the Law, &c.* So let hath these divine Records taken notice of this Way and Procedure of these wicked persecuting and invidious Men, in those Ages of the World.

7thly. And that the wicked Enemies of God, of Jesus Christ, and of his People and Laws; in those days, might carry their Matters the more plausible, and obtain an Opinion in Magistrates of their own Loyalty; and that they might get the greater countenance to their Proceedings, and awe and engage other inferior Magistrates and Officers, (contrary to their own Inclinations and Judgments,) to assist them in their revengeful Acts, they were found in this seventh Method or crafty Course. They did mostly pretend themselves to be special Friends to the Kings and Governors, and Laws Ecclesiastical and Civil, in those days, in all they did this way; and that Governors, Government and Laws, were much concerned in all that they alleged against those Persons whom they had accused; and that therefore only, were they so zealous against them in those Matters, altho in truth, 'twas only proceeding from their own envious and revengeful Hearts within them; Examples and Instances of which the Scripture hath also Recorded. In Ezra's days, when the Adversaries of the Jews being vexed at them, Ezra 4. 1, 2. &c. the Chancellor and others wrote to the King against them, v. 6. and amongst other things, they in their Letter acquainted him, that they were building that rebellious and bad City, &c. and in v. 10. they intreated the King in these words, which they suggested, *Be it known unto the King, That if this City be built, &c. then will they not pay Tole, Tribute and Custom, and so thou shalt endamage the Revenue of the Kings; and v. 13. Now said they, because we have maintenance, &c. it is not meet for us to see the Kings dishonour, therefore have we sent, and certified the King; here they pretended, that the Kings dishonour and the loss he was like to bear, was that they were concerned about; and that therefore the King was concerned to prevent it; when all this proceeded only from their Heart-Enmity against the Jews, as such, as he said in v. 1. & v. 5. of the same ch. of Ezra. In like manner did Sallath and other their Enemies, in Nehemiah's days, when they had understood, Chap. 2. that Nehemiah had come with Authority to build the City, they were sorely grieved, v. 10. It grieved them exceedingly that there was come a Man to seek the welfare of the Children of Israel; their Heart-Enmity against the Jews, made the Favor that the King shew'd to them, to be Grief to those; and contrary to true Loyalty, they endeavor'd to oppose what these were doing by Commission from the King; as in v. 19. They said to them, will ye rebel against the King? thus they suggested, that they would rebel against the King, altho they knew the King did allow what the Jews did in that matter; so again, the same Sallath, in a Letter sent by his Servants to Nehemiah, Chap. 6. told Nehemiah thus, v. 5, 6, 7. It is reported, &c. that thou and the Jews think to rebel; for which cause thou buildest the Wall, that thou must be their King, &c. and shall it be reported to the King according to these words; thus these Men hated of the Jews, made them suggest these things against them, wherein the King must be concerned; altho what the Jews did then, was by the Kings own Commission, which Loyal Subjects should have encouraged. Haman afterwards took the same way against Mordecai and the Jews, Esther 3. he being full of wrath against Mordecai, because he did not bow before him; v. 5. he the better to compass his revengeful Design, and being a great Favourite of the King, presently intells the King in the matter, and like a very Loyal Subject, tells the King, v. 8. thus, *There are certain people, &c. and their Laws are divers from all people; and what their? O neither keep they the Kings Laws; and in the next words, Therefore is not for the Kings profit to suffer them; let it be written, that they be destroyed, &c. v. 9. here he seemed to be greatly concerned for the King in this matter, as a Loyal Man; but the Holy Ghost hath there set forth, that he did this only to effect what his malicious Heart had resolved to do, in revenge against Mordecai, even to destroy him and all the Jews, who were peaceable and profitable People. So when the Enemies of Shabbath, who would have destroyed them, Dan 2. they presently there, v. 12. concern the King therewith, in these words, *There are certain Jews, &c. These men, O King, have not regarded thy Law, &c. which enraged the King presently; by which they had their End in the next verses: Here these Men pretended to the King, that these Jews, &c. were contrary to the***

King, would not worship the Image; when their Enemies knew the contrary, that they were good Subjects, only in that matter could not actually obey. And so dealt the Presidents and Princes with *Daniel* himself, whom they hated; because the King had advanced him above them, *Dan. 6.* their design was to destroy him; and the better to effect it, they presently concern the King and the Law in the matter, for both which, they seemed to be zealous; and having, on purpose to take him, procured a Law or Decree to have been made; they *v. 13.* said thus to the King, *Daniel who is of the captivity, &c. regardeth not thee, O King, nor the Decree which thou hast signed, &c.* Here they did insinuate that the King was concerned in Honor, to vindicate his Authority and Law against *Daniel*, as a despiser of both; altho they very well knew 'twas duty to God, not disloyalty to the King that made him to pray to God, contrary to that Decree; of which also the King himself was so sensible, that 'tis said of him, *v. 14. He was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him, and he labored till the going down of the Sun to deliver him;* to which these pretenders to Loyalty, (having their hearts set to destroy *Daniel*,) would not yield, their love to the King would not bring them to stoop to his desire, because it contradicted their design; but now they press the King with the Law, and shew their zeal for the punishment of Offenders against the Law, *v. 15.* as if the King had not power to discharge the Offenders; that their Heart-Enmity against *Daniel*, and their purpose to destroy him, not the Kings Honor nor true zeal for Justice, made these Men thus warm against *Daniel*, is here very evident. Thus did the unbelieving *Jews*, and other Enemies of Jesus Christ and of his Followers, in after Ages, against Christ himself and his Apostles, in those days, *Luke 23.* They were out of a design to destroy Christ, accused him as an Enemy to *Cæsar*, interests *Cæsar* in the matter, that they might seem to persecute Christ, rather from Loyalty than secret Hatred and Enmity they carryed against him; as in *v. 2.* they said, *We found this Fellow, &c. forbidding to give Tribute to Cæsar, saying, That he himself is a King;* by this they designed, as an expedient, the easier to get *Pilate* to pass Judgment against him, as is evident, *John 19.* for when they there perceived that *Pilate* was willing to release Christ, and probably would have done it; in *v. 12. The Jews cried out, If thou let this Man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend: for whosoever maketh himself a King, speaketh against Cæsar;* upon which words, 'tis said in the next verse, *That Pilate brought him out;* here was great concernedness for *Cæsar* seemingly, yet Envy was the motive, and Christs Life the design only, which *Pilate* very well knew, for he found no fault in him; and its expressly said so, *That he knew that the Priests had delivered him up for envy, Mark 15. 10.* Tho this very thing did so awe *Pilate*, (as they designed it should,) against his inclination and judgment, that he delivered this Just One into their hands to be Crucified. After the same manner did they with the Apostles and Disciples of Christ afterwards, in *Act. 7.* 'tis said there, *v. 5. That the Jews who believed not, moved with envy, took some base Fellows with them, and laid hold on Jason and some others, v. 6. and brought them before the Rulers, and there immediately they interest Cæsar and his Laws in the business, v. 7. and say, These do all contrary to the Decrees of Cæsar, saying, that there is another King Jesus:* So again, *Act. 18. The Jews there made an insurrection against Paul, and brought him before the Judgment Seat, v. 12, & 13. they charge him with breach of their Ecclesiastical Laws, saying there, This Fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the Law, or established mode; by which, no doubt, they engaged many readily to assist them in their persecuting of him; tho *Galio* drave them from the Judgment Seat, and would not meddle in those Laws, *verses 14, 16.* Thus doth the Scripture note, that the Enemies of the Saints and of the Truth it self, in those Ages, did walk in this Path also, in order to the effecting of their envious and revengeful Purposes.*

8thly. But when this Method neither did do the Work so effectually as they designed, then they proceeded against them in an eighth Way, that was, They did in most places stir up base Fellows, and all sorts of People; and together with them, did they tumultuously take hold of them,

hale

hale them to Prison and before Magistrates, and oftentimes contrary to all Laws and Justice, Order and Peace, beat them, banish them, and hastily stone them, and go about to kill them; as the *Psalmist* said of them, in his days, *Psalm* 53. 4. in these words, *Who eateth up my people as they eat Bread*; of which doings Jesus foretold and acquainted his Disciples, that they were to bear a share in, *Mat.* 10. *They will* (saith he there,) *deliver you up to the Council, and they will scourge you in their Synagogues; and ye shall be brought before Governors and Kings for my sake, &c.* v. 17, 18. Nay, Christ himself escaped not such rude and illegal Dealings, as 'tis taken notice of, *Luke* 4. 28, 29. in these words, *They were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust him out of the City, and laid him to the brow of the hill, whereon the City was built, that they might cast him down headlong; and Luke* 22. *The multitude, with the chief Priests and Captains of the Temple and Elders, came to take him, v. 47. with swords and staves, as against a Thief, as Christ said, v. 52. and these, in this tumultuous manner, led him to the High Priests house, v. 54. & v. 63, & 64. They mock him and smote him, having blindfolded him, they stroke him on the face, saying, Prophesie who it is who smote thee; and in v. 1. of the next Chap. it is again said, That the whole multitude arose and led him to Pilate: Here the common Rabble, as well as the great Ones, hurly'd him about, mock and beat him in a tumultuous and an illegal manner. So did the Enemies of the Jews before, in Nebemiahs days, conspire to do; Nebem. 4. when they had observed, that all their other Attempts for hindring their Building would not do, (the Jews having the Kings Authority with them,) Sanballat and others here being very wroth, v. 7. did conspire all of them together to come to fight against Jerusalem to hinder it; such was their Enmity against the Jews here, for building by the Kings Authority, that how Loyal soever they otherways pretended to be, yet here did they agree most rebelliously and wickedly, to hinder the Building by fighting against them. They readily obeyed the King in Ezra's time, when his command was to cause the Work to cease; but now when they were by the Kings command to build, they would disobey, and in an hostile and rebellious manner hinder it. The like did the persecuting Jews themselves, in the Apostles days too, in *Act.* 4. *As the Apostles spake unto the people, the Priests, and the Captain of the Temple, and the Sadduces came upon them, v. 1. and being that they taught, &c. they laid bands on them, and put them into hold, v. 2, and 3. so again, Act. 5. when they had understood that the Apostles had done Miracles, &c. v. 15, 16. The High Priest rose up and all those who were with him (which is the Sect of the Sadduces,) and were filled with indignation, v. 17. and in the following verses, They laid their hands on the Apostles, and put them into common Prison. Stephen was so illegally and riotously handled, Act. 6. when the Libertines and others had disputed with him, and not able to resist the spirit and wisdom by which he spake, v. 9, 10. They, in v. 12. (to confute him,) stirred up the People, and the Elders, and the Scribes, and came upon him, caught and brought him to the Council; and again, in the next Chap. 'tis said, v. 54. that when they had heard what Stephen said, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth; and in v. 57. and so onward, That they ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the City and stoned him. It is recorded also of Saul, Act. 8. v. 3. That he made havock of the Church, entering into every house, and halcing men and women, committing them to Prison; which he, after his Conversion, did confess, Act. 22. in these words, v. 5, 6. *I persecuted this way to the death, binding and delivering into Prison, both men and women, I went unto Damascus to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, to be punished; and in v. 19. said he to the Lord, I imprisoned and beat in every Synagogue, them who believed on thee. Thus did others deal with Paul himself, when he became a preacher of Christ, and with Syllas, Act. 16. Paul having cast out the Spirit of Divination out of the Damsel, v. 18. her masters, v. 19, 20. caught Paul and Syllas, drew them into the Market-place to the Rulers, and brought them to the Magistrates, and there accused them for Troublers of the City; upon which, The multitude rose up together against them, and the Magistrates commanded to beat them, and when they had laid***

many

many stripes upon them, they cast them into Prison, v. 23, 23. All which Proceedings were illegal, violent and tumultuous, and ought not to have been done to them; as Paul himself told them, v. 25, & 26. (when the Magistrates had sent to discharge them,) in these words, *They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into Prison, and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily, let them come themselves and fetch us out;* and in the next verses, *The Magistrates feared when they heard that they were Romans, and they came and besought them to go out.* Even so did the unbelieving Jews, *Acts 23.* upon their observation that multitudes did hear the Word, *were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, Acts 23. 45.* and upon their second speaking, *v. 46.* and so on, *The Jews v. 50. stirred up the devout and honourable Women, and the chief Men of the City, and raised Persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts;* here, when contradicting and blasphemy would not do, they stir up a Tumult, and by illegal and violent means drive them away: And this course they did unnecessarily follow, *Acts 14. 2. 2.* it is Recorded in these words, *That the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the Brethren;* and *v. 5.* as the effect on't, *ris said, That when there was an assault made, both of the Gentiles and of the Jews, with their Rulers, to use them despitefully, and to slay them, they fled;* and *v. 19.* *They pursued them, came where they were, and having persuaded the People, and stoned Paul, drew him out of the City, &c.* Thus did they here, most unjustly, riotously and illegally, persecute Paul and others, stirred up the People every where so to do: Again, they did walk in the same Steps in *Acts 17.* 'tis said of them thus, in *v. 5.* *They being moved with envy, took to themselves certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a Company, and set the whole City in an uprore, and assaulted the house of Jason;* and *v. 6.* *They drew him to the Magistrate;* here these made great Riots, dealt rudely, illegally and violently with Christ and the Saints, when by Law they could not effect their Purposes: And again, *v. 13.* of the same Chap. *They pursued Paul & Barsas, and stirred up the people there too.* And in *Acts 18.* *The Jews there made an insurrection with the accord against Paul, and drew him to the Judgment Seat, v. 12.* and when Gallio refused to meddle with the matter, *because there was no matter of wrong that he was charged with, or wickedness, verses 13, 15, 16.* *They then took Sosthenes, the chief Ruler of the Synagogue, and beat him before the Judgment Seat;* such Outrages as these did they then commit: The like riotous, illegal and tumultuous Ways, did the Silver-Smiths take against Paul, *Acts 19.* when they saw that their Craft was like to be set at naught, if People believed Diana to be a Goddess, *v. 24.* and soon, *they were full of wrath, v. 28.* and the whole City was filled with confusion, and having caught Gaius and Archelus, *v. 29.* they walked with one accord into the Theater; they were in a great Tumult and Riot in the City, in the next verses, which whole Proceeding was illegal, as the Town Clerk afterward told them, in these words, *v. 36, 37.* and so on, *To fight as bequiescent and to do nothing easily, for ye have brought hither these Men who are neither rabbets of Churches, nor yet blasphemers of your Goddess; wherefore, if the craftsmen have any matter against any man, the Law is open, &c. let them implead one another, if it be concerning a civil matter, it shall be determined in a lawful Assembly, for we are in danger of being called in question for this days uprore, &c.* This course was not allowable here, among the Heathens themselves. The Jews again dealt so with Paul, *Acts 21. 27, 28.* *They stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, and cried out, Men of Israel help, this is the man, &c.* upon which cry, all the City was moved, in the next verses; and the people ran together, and they took Paul and drew him out of the Temple, and went about to kill him, till the Captain came, whom when they saw, they left off beating of him; yea, more than forty conspired together, and resolved to kill him, *Acts 23. 12.* Thus hath the Holy Ghost taken notice of this Practice of the wicked Enemies of God and his People, in those days, and that it was very common, in those days: The Apostle James intimated in the 2d. Chap. of his Epistle, *v. 6, & 7.* saith he there, *Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the Judgment Seats? do not they blaspheme that worthy Name by which ye are called? These* Interrogations, implies an Affirmation, that they did so, used so to do.

Neither here did their Envy and Equity against the Saints in Old Testament times, nor against Christ and his Followers, in the New, end and proceed no further; no, they were never satisfied while any of those remained alive upon the Earth; like those *Act. 22. 12.* who cryed out against Paul, in these words, *Away with such a Fellow from the Earth, for it is not fit he should live;* right or wrong, let him be taken off the Earth: They therefore persecuted them to the death; that did they delign, that did they pursue by all the before-mentioned ways: Nay, such was their bitter Enmity, that if the Magistrate at any time, seemed to be willing to acquit any of them because of their Innocency, they cryed out upon him, away with him; and told Herod he was no Friend to Caesar, if he let him go; and that rather then Jesus should be acquitted, they desired a most notorious Criminal should be saved, even Barabbas, who for Sedition and Murder in the City, was cast into Prison; they preferred the most vile Men to that most innocent and unblamable One. Further instances of this too, the same divine Records hath delivered down; as the Apostle James said in the general, *Chap. 5. 6.* of rich Men, *Ye have condemned and killed the just, and he doth not resist you.* So said the Psalmist, *Psal. 37. The wicked hath drawn out the sword, v. 14. to slay such as be of an upright Conversation:* And again, in *Psal. 44. 22. For thy sake are we killed all the day long, we are counted as Sheep for the slaughter:* And more particularly, *Gen. 4.* Cain there having brought an Offering, and Abel another to the Lord, and the Lord respecting Abels and not Cains, *v. 3. 4. 5.* Cain, *v. 8.* upon this very account, *rose up against him, and slew him.* In like manner did Josephs Brethren intend to do with him, *Gen. 37.* they perceiving that their Father loved him more than he did them, envyed him, or hated him, *v. 3, & 4.* and in *v. 18.* *Seeing him afar off, they conspired against him to slay him;* and *v. 20.* said, *Come now, let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, &c.* Nothing less than his Life would satisfie some of them at least; such was their Envy against their innocent Brother, in that day. Jezebel, Ababs Wife, after Elijah had caused the Prophets of Baal to be slain, *1 Kings. 18.* the Chap. 19. understanding the matter by the King, sent a Messenger to Elijah, in *v. 2.* saying, *So let the gods do, and more also; if I make not thy life as the life of one of them, by so morrow about this time;* such was her hatred of him, that nothing but his Life was desired by her; but he fled. So Hamans fiery Enmity against Mordecai, could be no way quenched, but by his Life, and the Life of all the Jews, *Ester g. 5, 6.* when Mordecai would not bow, and give Haman reverence to him, he was full of wrath, and thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; but he and all the Jews must be destroyed together; which he pursued in the following verses. After the same manner did they pursue Christ himself to the death, *John 18.* and because the Jews themselves could not proceed so far as to put him to death by their Law, (as themselves confessed *v. 31.*) they therefore brought him before Pilate to be judged, that they might by pretence of that Authority put him to death; which afterwards they did, (tho so just a One as he was, and by Pilate declared so to be,) as is in the next Chap. recorded; yea, when Pilate would have released him, because of his Innocency, *Luke 23. 14, 15.* the Jews cryed out, *v. 21. Crucifie him, Crucifie him;* right or wrong they must have his life; this was in their hearts to have, as appears further, *v. 22, 23. The Scribes and Pharisees having beforehand, Mat. 12. 14. taken counsel how they might destroy him.* Christ did forewarn his Disciples and Followers, and intimated unto them, that they should be so dealt with too, *Mat. 10. The Brother* (saith he there, in *v. 21.) shall deliver up the Brother to death, and the Father the Child, and the Children shall rise up against their Parents, and put them to death;* according to which they frequently did in those days, as the Scripture doth evidence. When Christ had raised up Lazarus, *John 11. 43, 44. The chief Priests, in Chap. 12. v. 10, 11. consulted, that they might put Lazarus also to death, because that by reason of him many of the Jews believed on Jesus;* So *Act. 5.* because the Apostles had preached Christ before the Council there, they presently consulted to slay them, *v. 33.* The same Spirit was Saul of, *Act. 8. 1.* he there consented to the death of Stephen; and *Act. 9. 1.* its said of him, *That he yet breathed out threatnings and slaughter against the Disciples of the Lord;* which he himself acknowledged

sedged he had done, *Act. 22. v. 4.* in these words, *I persecuted this way to the death; so dealt he and others with Stephen upon his preaching of Christ, Act. 7. They ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the City, and stoned him, v. 57, 58. Herod the King, Act. 12. stretched forth his hand to vex certain of the Church, v. 11 and v. 2. he killed James with the sword; yea, there were more than fourscore of the Jews, who bound themselves in a curse not to eat or drink till they had killed Paul, v. 12, 13. of which they acquainted the chief Priests and Elders, and directed them in a way to effect it too, in the next verse. And again, Act. 25. The chief Priests and chief of the Jews designed to kill him; and in order to it, they desired the Governor of Cilicia to send for Paul to Jerusalem, v. 21 and v. 23. it is said, That there were liers in wait in the way to kill him; thus did they pursue their very Lives by all their former Methods. For which doing, the Apostle complained, in his First Epist. to the Thessalonians, of the Jews; Chap. 1. v. 14, 15. thus, *The Jews who have killed the Lord Jesus, and their own Prophet, and have persecuted us, &c.* Thus hath the Scripture also taken notice, that their Enmity was such, that by way of revenge, nothing less would serve them than the very Lives of the Saints and Servants of God; yea, of Christ himself; in those days, they could not rest till they had taken them off the Earth.*

Then Thirdly, As the Holy Ghost hath by Scripture Records, shewn the bitter Enmity that was seated in the Hearts of the wicked, in those days, against the Saints and Holiness it self; and the several Methods those Men then took, to express or evidence their Enmity against them and it, for their suppression and to hinder the growth of Holiness; so also hath the same Spirit deluded down to after Age, many of the Grounds and Causes of such their Enmity against, and hatred of them, and which put them upon Persecuting the one and Opposing the other.

The First and Original Cause why they did persecute at that rate in those days, was from that irreconcilable Enmity which they brought into the World with them against God; against Christ who came forth from him; against his Laws and Government, as it said, *Rom. 8. 7. The carnal mind is enmity against God, cannot be subject to him; they cannot endure any thing of the Spirit whilst they are in the Flesh; in the same State in which they blamed the World; they cannot bear with the Light which shineth in the Law of God; because their Works are Works of Darkness; and hence came their Hearts to be at enmity and hatred against the Saints and Servants of God; such who owned God and his Laws, and subjected themselves to him and it, or did preach up Subjection to the same; and so consequently, to persecute their Persons, and oppose and obstruct the spreading of the Truth, by all the ways they could; as the Psalmist implied they did, when he spoke in *Psal. 137. thus, They do us hurt by night, and the people murmur against us; The Kings of the Earth set themselves, and the Rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his Anointed, saying, Let us break their Bands, and cast their Girds from us, &c.* they could not bear them; they would not be bound by them, v. 1, 2. Here their Enmity against God, and Christ and his Laws, put them upon imagining, taking counsel how to ease themselves of the good Men of God and Christ; and as a consequent, how to ease themselves of all those who did submit to those Laws of God and walk with him; as the Psalmist again did clearly assert, *Psal. 83. in these words, v. 1. Thine enemies make a tumult, and they who hate thee lift up the head, v. 2. what follows, v. 3. they have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones; and v. 4. they said, Come and let us cut them off from being a Nation; here first they hate God himself, and then consult to destroy his People. To this cause doth the Psalmist reduce it in those days, *Psal. 44. v. 21. For thy sake (saith he there,) are we killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter; it was for Gods sake they hated him, and must needs kill his whom they could reach. Jeremiah spoke after the like manner, Chap. 15. v. 15. he prays thus, Revenge me of my Persecutors, &c. and useth this as the Argument, Know, (saith he,) that for thy sake have I suffered rebuke; it was for his faithfulness to God. So Christ told his Disciples, *Mat. 10. That they should be brought before Governors and Kings but for his name sake, v. 8. they****

hated Christ, so punished his Followers; and again, *v. 20. He shall be hated of all men for my name sake*; their hatred of Christ is assigned here, as the cause of their hatred against his Followers; as Christ further hinted to the Jews in the Parable he spake to them, *Luke 19.* concerning a Noble Man, *v. 12.* where in *v. 14.* he said, *That the Citizens hated him, and sent forth a Messenger after him, saying, We will not have this Man to reign over us.* The unbelieving Jews would have none of his Government, 'twas too strict for them; they hated him, and from thence 'twas that they could not endure such who either preached him up as Lord, or his Laws as that by which they ought to be ruled, or did submit themselves to him as it is; and they persecuted them as intolerable, used all means to hinder the publication of his Laws, or him as Lord and Saviour, and to hinder others submision to him and it; for which Christ pronounced against them, *Mat. 23. 13.* in these words, *We say you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites, for ye shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against Men; for ye neither go in your selves, neither suffer ye them who are coming to go in.* They from their hatred to Christ would not be subject to him and his Laws themselves, nor would they suffer others to be subject, but did oppose and persecute them, and contradict and blaspheme the Doctrine, persuading People to subjection to him; and because the Light which shone in his Life and Doctrine, and in his Followers, did discover and reprove their wicked Manners and Deeds of Darkness, it could not be bora with; as Christ told his unbelieving Brethren, *John 7. The world cannot hate you, but we it hateth.* *v. 7.* Why? Because (said he.) *I testify of it, that their works are evil.* Again, *John 3. 19. 20. Light is come into the world, but men love darkness rather than light. Why? Because their deeds are evil; for every one who doth evil, hateth the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd, or discovered.* Thus hath the Scripture assigned this to be the Original, or one main Cause of the wicked Ones Enmity against, and persecuting of the Saints, and their high opposition against the Light of the Gospel and true Holiness is told.

2dly. It did arise from this, That the Saints, the called of God, did evidence themselves to have been changed from what they were by Nature, and by Practice too; they owned and loved what formerly they had hated; they had declared themselves not to be of the World, could not run with the same excess of Riot with others, as they had done, do as formerly they did; but their Lives and Works did contradict and reprove the Lives of their Persecutors. Now this they could not bear, therefore did they hate them, and brake out against them in these various Methods and Ways before noted; as the Scripture saith, *He who doth evil, hateth the light,* *John 3. 20.* No sooner did Saul (whom they had so much loved formerly,) leave his persecuting of the Saints, and being changed, did evidence the same by joyning with them, and in preaching up what his Heart had been against; but the Jews hated him, and studied to kill him, *Act. 9. 19. 20.* and so on; and that it would be so, Christ had told his before, *John 15. If (saith he there, v. 19.) ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore doth the world hate you.* Here did he intimate to them, that no sooner should they evidence, by their good Life, that they are called out of the World, and off from the evil Courses thereof, but the World hated them upon that very account, and thereupon persecuted them; as 'tis written *Habak. 1. 13.* in those days, *That the wicked despised the man who was more righteous than he.* And 'tis expressly said, *Gen. 4. 5. That Cain was angry with his Brother Abel, because the Sacrifice Abel offered, was accepted and not his, and he, in v. 8. slew him;* altho the reason given of his Non-acceptance was, because he did not well, *v. 7.* and his Brother did; as the Holy Ghost doth affirm in these words, *1 John 3. 12. Not as Cain was of that wickedness, and slew his Brother; and wherefore slew he him? because his own Works were evil, and his Brothers righteous;* upon which account the Saints are exhorted, in the next verse, not to marvel, tho the World do hate them. When Elijah had but evidenced his Change, by reproving King Achaziah for his sending to the God of Eckron, to enquire if he should recover, *2 Kings 1. v. 2, 3, 4.* the King was so enraged against him, that he *v. 9. sent a Captain, with his fifty to search him, and the*

Captain

*Capeans and his men were destroyed by fire from Heaven; yet he said another, and tho he was destroyed, sent a bird, in the next verses; such was his bitterness against Eliseus for this cause only. So said the Psalmist also, Psal. 38. 19. and so on, They who hate me are multiplied, &c. They also who render evil for good are mine Adversaries; because I follow the thing which good is; there is the cause why wicked Men are adversaries to good Men; only because they are good now, and not such as formerly they were. So again, Psal. 37. 12. The wicked (saith the Psalmist,) ploteb against the just; and v. 14. They have drawn out the sword to slay such as be of an upright Conversation. So said Amos too, Chap. 5. 10. They hate him who reproveth in the gate, they abhor him who speaketh uprightly, and v. 12. They afflict the just. Here the Scripture assigned no other cause, why these Men did enny, hate and persecute them, but this, that these hated and persecuted Ones were just, righteous and good, and reproveth their Persecutors for the contrary; this was sufficient to render them obnoxious to the wickedst hatred and scorn. Herod in those days, committed John to Prison, and would have put him to death, because John had told him, *it was not lawful to marry his Brother Philips Wife*, Mat. 14. 3. 4. 5. The Apostle Peter declares this too in his time, 1. Epist. Chap. 4. speaking of the unconverted Gentiles thoughts of the converted Ones; because they could not do as they had done, and as the wicked still did, v. 3. 4. in these words, *Wherefore they think it strange; that ye run not with them into the same excess of Riot, speaking evil of you*; Here they speak evilly of the Saints, because they could not be so wicked as they; they wondered at their change, could no longer think or speak well of them. So that the Scripture doth make it evident; that the wicked unbelieving Ones did in those days, hate and persecute the Saints, and Saints, and only because they were new Creatures, called out of the World, Men of a good Life, could not be and do as others did, or do as they themselves sometimes had done; by which they did reprove the Spirits and Doing of those wicked Persecutors.*

2dly. A third cause or ground which the Holy Ghost in Scripture hath assigned, from whence the Envy and persecuting Spirits of wicked Men did arise; that was the Pride, height of Spirit, and revengeful Nature which was in them: Such was their Pride, that they would not seek God themselves, nor bear with those who did, as the Psalmist said, Psal. 10. 4. *That the wicked through the pride of his countenance, will not seek God*; and in v. 8. 'tis said of him, *That in the secret places he doth he murder the innocent, his eyes are privily set against the poor*; as their Pride here would not permit them to seek God, so it set them against the Saints, innocent Ones who did seek God. The Psalmist again, Psal. 119. 69. said, *The proud have forged a lie against me*: And again, Psal. 113. 4. he saith, *Our Soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of them who are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud*: Here the Holy Ghost takes notice, that the Pride of their Hearts did render the Saints the objects of their Scorn, and put them upon forging of lies against them. This very thing set Haman into so great hatred against Mordicai, and made him so resolute on revenge against him and all the Jews, Esther 3. his proud Heart could not bear with Mordicai, because he did not arise and do him Reverence, as is expressed v. 5. in these words, *When Haman saw that Mordicai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath*; and, in the next verse, *He thought scorn to lay hands on Mordicai alone, but sought to destroy all the Jews with him*; such were his revengeful Purposes from the dreadful Pride of his Heart: Hence it came to pass that the Presidents and Princes in Daniels time, so much hated him, studied to revenge, and took those courses to execute it upon him; Dan. 6. He being now advanced by King Darius over all the Presidents and Princes, v. 1. 2. their proud hearts could not bear it; and this put them upon seeking occasion against him concerning the Kingdom, v. 4. and finding none; so good a Subject and innocent Man was he; they in the next verses resolves to take him in the matters of his God; procured a Law, and pursued him in the ways they had devised, till they had gotten him into the Lions Den; tho the King himself would have saved him. From the like pride of Heart the Libertines and others, who were disputing with Stephen, Act. 6. and not able v. 9. to resist

resist the spirit and wisdom by which he spake, nor able to bear to be silenced by Stephen; they in the next verses evidenced their Pride and revengeful Spirit, they confute him by suborning Witnesses, stirring up the People, Elders and Scribes against him, caught him and carried him before the Council. The like Spirit did the Jews evidence in those days, in their Behaviour towards the Man who was born blind, John 9. when he had by such convincing Arguments which they could not resist, proved Christ to be of God, v. 30. and so on: The Pride of the Pharisees being such, that they could not bear to be put to silence by such a poor unlearned Man as he was; therefore they v. 34. took this course; they first say to him, *Thou wast altogether born in sin, and dost thou teach us?* And they Excommunicated him: Having no better Argument, they confuted him this way, and revenged upon him after this sort. Thus hath the Scripture noted, that the wicked Ones envy against good Men often did arise from the Pride of their Hearts and revengeful Nature.

4thly. A fourth cause or ground from whence they so maligned and persecuted the Saints, Christ himself and his Followers, in those days did arise from their great ignorance of God himself, of Christ, and of the Saints, in persecuting of whom they persecuted Christ, as he told Saul, *Act. 9. 4.* As this said of Pharaoh, *Exod. 5. 2. Who is the Lord that I should let Israel go? I know not the Lord* (said he,) therefore I will not let Israel go; his ignorance of God here, made him oppress and grieve Gods People still, and pursue them afterwards. So it was with Saul, *Act. 9.* when Christ had said, *Why persecutest thou me?* Saul answered, *Who art thou, Lord?* v. 4. 5. Here his ignorance of Jesus was the cause why he persecuted him and his Saints. Christ intimates this also to be the cause why the Jews hated him and persecuted him to the death; *Luke 23.* when they were Crucified for him, he there prays for them in these words, v. 34. *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.* Had they known him (saith the Scripture,) they would not have crucified the Lord of glory, *1 Cor. 2. 8.* Their ignorance here was the cause of their persecuting Acts, and of their malignant Mind against him and his. The Psalmist took it for granted, that in those days it did proceed from hence, *Psal. 14. 4.* thus he said, *Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge, who eat up my people as they eat bread? Which Saying strongly implies, that had they had knowledge they would not, they could not have done so.* The Apostles also in their time, did intimate the like, and assigned the Ignorance of the Jews to be the cause of their malignity against Christ and his, *Act. 3.* they tell them v. 15. *That they had killed the Prince of life;* but ch. 17. saith to them thus, *Now Brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your Rulers.* And again, *Act. 13.* said the Apostle to them in v. 27. *That they who dwell at Jerusalem, and their Rulers; because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the Prophets, (which are read every Sabbath-day) they have fulfilled them in condemning him; and in v. 28. That they found not cause of death in him; yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain.* Upon the same Foundation of Ignorance, Paul acknowledgeth that he went, *Act. 26.* *I verily thought with my self, v. 9. that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus.* The Jews themselves John 9. did own their ignorance of Christ, v. 29. (said they,) *As for this Fellow we know not from whence he is; all the undeniable Evidences they had had, that he was of God, did not enlighten them nor convince them; therefore they persisted to envy and persecute him; and as to such who professed to own him, many denied him.* Titus 1. 16. *being unto every good work reprobate, (or void of Judgment).* In like manner the Scripture declared, that afterwards they persecuted and hated good Men upon this account, not from hence, that they knew not God, Christ, or them, *1 Jo. 3. 1.* *Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knoweth not him;* and as Christ had told his Disciples, *John 15. 20.* *If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you;* and in the next verses gives the reason of it in these words, *All these things will they do unto you for my name sake, because they know not him who sent me.* So again, *John 16.* *The time cometh (said Christ there,) v. 2. that whosoever killeth you, shall think he doth God good service;* the reason of which he gives in the next verse in these words, *These things*

will they do, because they have not known the Father, nor me. From this Root also, doubtless it came to pass, that the Christians in that Age were called a Sect, *Act. 28.* and were so much spoken against every where; as *Pauls* Countrymen said, *v. 2. We desire* (said they to him,) *to hear of thee what thou thinkest, for as concerning this Sect, we know that every where 'tis spoken against;* right or wrong they speak against them and their way, because they understood them not nor it. *Peter* in general assigns this as the cause of Mens speaking evil of many things, *2 Pet. 2. 12. Those* (saith he, speaking there of wicked Men,) *as natural brute Beasts, &c. spake evil of the things which they understood not;* nay, 'tis marvellous, that the malice of the *Jews* against *Christ* did so blind them, that when *Judas* came to them, and acknowledged to them that he had betrayed innocent Blood, *Mat. 27. 3, 4. They say, What is that to us? look thou to that;* when they had been the chief Instruments in the betraying of him, and putting him to death. This doth the Scripture Records note this Cause among others, of which Mens envy against *Christ* himself, and his Followers in those days, against the Saints of old before his time, and why they persecuted them.

5thly. A fifth cause or ground yet, which the same Scripture doth assign or declare of these their Spirits and Doings, was from a causeless and carnal Fear which they had conceived; that if the Saints of old, *Jesus Christ* and his Followers, in those days, were suffered amongst them, or if their Doctrine should have prevailed, then these would grow to big for them, and would withdraw their subjection from their Rulers, Rebel, usurp Authority, and would be had in greatest Esteem and Repute by the People, and so derogate from the Honor, Esteem, Authority and Rule of those who did thus envy and persecute them; they were ready to think that all Men would believe on *Christ*, and that all the World would go after him, if they should have let Him and his Followers alone, and should not have stopped their course, as they did declare, *John 11. 48. If we let him thus alone* (said they there,) *all men will believe on him, and the Romans shall come and take away both our Place and Nation:* And again, *John 12. 19.* (they said,) *Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him:* thus did their causeless Jealousie work to Envy and Hatred, and Persecution. This made the Chief Priests and Scribes so highly displeased, *Mat. 21.* when they had seen *Christ* to have such Esteem among the People, and the same so evidenced by the multitudes spreading of their Garments, decking the Ways where he did ride, with Branches, and crying out *Hosanna to the Son of David, blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the Highest, v. 8, 9, 15.* and upon this, they *v. 23.* demanded of *Christ*, *by what authority he did those things?* as if he were about to usurp Authority, or at least that he did it against or without Authority. Particular instances of this cause or ground too, not a few the Scripture takes notice of, as in *Exod. 1.* The King there was (without cause,) jealous that the *Jews* there would grow too great and numerous, and Rebel, therefore conspired to prevent their increase by dealing hardly with them; his Jealousie is expressed *v. 9, 10.* in these words, *The Children of Israel are more and mightier than we. Come, let us deal wisely with them lest they multiply, and it come to pass that when they fall out with any War, they join also to our Enemies and fight against us.* This causeless Fear put him upon dealing cruelly with them, in order to prevent their growth, as in the following verses; upon which account also *Josephs* Brethren went, *Gen. 37.* they suspecting by his Dreams, and his Fathers shew of love to him, that *Joseph* would be greater than they, *v. 4.* and the *8, & 11.* they thereupon are said there, *to hate him, and envy him;* and *v. 19, 20.* of the same Chap. they conspired to slay him: They could not bear with the thoughts of this, that he should be greater than they in his Fathers Heart, nor superior unto them in after-times, which they had guessed his Dreams did intimate that he should be; therefore they hate him, and resolve to prevent the coming thereof to pass, by taking away of his Life; tho God purposed to advance *Joseph* to save them alive, as *Joseph* afterwards told them, *Gen. 45. 5.* This Spirit is taken notice of also in *Josias* from the same ground, in *Moses* time, *Numb. 11. 26. When Eldad and Medad had prophesied in* the

the Camp, the young man presently (thinking *Moses* was clouded somewhat by this,) told *Moses* on't, v. 27. and v. 28. said, *My Lord, Moses forbid them*; which Spirit of Envy in *Joshua*, and the cause on't too *Moses* perceived, and blamed him for it, in these words, in the next verse, *Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the Lords people were Prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them all*; doubtless, *Joshua* here thought that none should have the honor of a Spirit of Prophecy but *Moses*; or if they had, they should not shew it, as being eclipsing to *Moses* Glory; and this stirred up this Envy in him. For this cause also did *Saul* eye and envy *David* in that day, and sought his Life; *David* had gotten far into the opinion of his Fellow Subjects, through his prudent Behavior in the Kings business; and *Saul* feared that he would usurp the Kingdom too doubtless, which he intimated in these words, 1 Sam. 18. *When the Women came after the overthrow of the Philistines, singing, in v. 6, 7. that Saul had slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands, he v. 8. was very wroth, and he saying, displeased him; and he said, they have ascribed to David his ten thousand, and to me thousand, and can be have more but the Kingdom?* The Effect followeth in the next verses; *Saul* from that day following eyed *David*, and resolved, and endeavored to kill him; and Chap. 19. 1. *He gave order to his Son and Servants to kill him.* Yea, he was also wroth with his Son *Jonathan* upon the same grounds, for *Jonathan*'s sake, 1 Sam. 19. when *Jonathan* had been excusing *David*'s absence, v. 28, 29. *Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, v. 30. and he said unto him, Do not I know that thou hast chosen the Son of Jesse to shine own confusion, &c.* and in the next verse, he said, *As long as the Son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy Kingdom; wherefore send and fetch him to me, for he shall surely die.* Here *Saul*'s apprehension that *David* did eclipse his Glory, and that the People had too much esteem for *David*, and that he might prove disloyal and usurp the Kingdom, and that it could not be sure to him or his Son if *David* lived, was the great cause of his envy and malice against *David*, and his pursuing of his Life; altho *David* had fully evidenced his Duty and Loyalty to *Saul* all along; and eminently in that, when *Saul* had been twice in the power of his hands, that he might have slain him, he would not hurt him, not revenge himself, yea, and rescued him from those with him who would have done it; all which *Saul* himself acknowledged, as it is at large 1 Sam. 24. 4, 5, 6, 17. Chap. 26. 8, 9, 10, 11, 25. After the same manner did *Herod* the King against *Christ* in those days, and from the same cause or ground, Mat. 2. He having heard that *Christ* was born, and that some had come to him to worship him, v. 1, 2, 3. *He was troubled and all Jerusalem with him.* He now began to be jealous, that this *Christ* the King of the *Jews*, might possibly take away his Power or lessen him, and he thereupon resolves to prevent it; and v. 8. sends to enquire after him, under pretence that he would worship him, but (as is evident by the Sequel,) it was that he might kill him; for v. 16. it is said, *That when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, he was very wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the Children which were in Bethlehem, and the coast thereof, from two years old and upwards, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men.* Here, rather than he would endanger his Honor and Authority, (which he had cautiously feared if *Christ* lived,) he (that he might be sure to hit *Christ*;) shed the innocent Blood of many Children. Upon the same grounds went the Chief Priests and Pharisees, in John 11. 47, 48. in their envy against, and persecuting of *Christ*; said they in their Council, *What do we do? for this man doth many miracles. If we let him alone all men will believe on him; and the Romans shall come and take away both our Place and Nation.* Here were they jealous, that if *Christ* did go on, he would get such Esteem and Honor, that it would endanger their Honor and Authority too, that they should be lessened among the People; and this set them at enmity against *Christ*, and upon persecuting of him, and using of all means to render Him and his Doctrin contemptible, and not to be endured. Upon this account too, the Adversaries of the *Jews* dealt so with them, Ezra 4. They (hearing that the *Jews* were building the Temple, v. 1.) presently in the 12, & 13. and following verses, conceived a causeless Fear that these would Rebel, withhold the Kings due;

many stripes upon them, they cast them into Prison, v. 22, 23. All which Proceedings were illegal, violent and tumultuous; and ought not to have been done to them; as Paul himself told them, v. 35, & 36. (When the Magistrates had sent to discharge them,) in these words, *They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into Prison, and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily, let them come themselves and fetch us out;* and in the next verse, *The Magistrates feared when they heard that they were Romans, and they came and besought them to go out.* Even so did the unbelieving Jews, *Act. 13.* upon their observation that multitudes did hear the Word, *were filled with envy, and spake against these things; which were spoken by Paul, &c.* v. 45. and upon their second speaking, v. 46. and so on, *The Jews, 50. stirred up the devout and honourable Women, and the chief Men of the City, and raised Persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts;* here, when contradicting and blasphemy would not do, they stir up a Tumult, and by illegal and violent means drive them away. And this course they did incessantly follow, *Act. 14. v. 2.* it is Recorded in these words, *That the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the Brethren;* and v. 5. as the effect of 'tis said, *That when there was an assault made, both of the Gentiles and of the Jews, with their Rulers, so use them despitefully and to stone them, they fled;* and v. 19. *They pursued them, came where they were, and having persuaded the People, and stoned Paul, drew him out of the City, &c.* Thus did they here, most unjustly, riotously and illegally, persecute Paul and others, stirred up the People every where so to do: Again, they did walk in the same Steps in *Act. 17.* 'tis said of them thus, in v. 5. *They being moved with envy, took to themselves certain lewd Fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a Company, and set the whole City in an uprore, and assaulted the house of Jason;* and v. 6. *They drew him to the Magistrate;* here these made great Riots, dealt rudely, illegally and violently with Christ and the Saints; when by Law they could not effect their Purposes: And again, v. 13. of the same Chap. *They pursued Paul to Barea, and stirred up the people there too.* And in *Act. 18.* *The Jews there made an insurrection with one accord against Paul, and drew him to the Judgment Seat, v. 12. and when Gallio refused to meddle with the matter, because there was no matter of wrong that he was charged with, on wickedness, verses 14, 15, 16. They then took Sosthenes, the chief Ruler of the Synagogue, and beat him before the Judgment Seat;* such Outrages as these did they then commit. The like riotous, illegal and tumultuous Ways, did the Silver-Smiths take against Paul, *Act. 19.* when they saw that their Craft was like to be set at naught, if People believed *Diana* to be no Goddess, v. 24. and so on, *they were full of wrath, v. 28. and the whole City was filled with confusion, and having caught Gaius and others, v. 29. they rushed with one accord into the Theater;* they were in a great Tumult and Riot in the City, in the next verses, which whole Proceeding was illegal, as the Town Clerk afterward told them, in these words, v. 36, 37. and so on, *It ought to be quiet and to do nothing easily, for ye have brought hither these Men who are neither robbers of Churches, nor yet blasphemers of your Goddesses; wherefore, if the artificers have any matter against any man, let the Courts open, &c. let them implead one another; if it be concerning a bad matter, it shall be determined in a lawful Assembly, for we are in danger of being called in question for this day's uprore, &c.* This course was not allowable here, among the Heathens themselves. The Jews again dealt so with Paul, *Act. 21. 27, 28.* *They stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, and cried out, Men of Israel help, this is the man, &c.* upon which cry, all the City was moved, in the next verses, *and the people enraged, and they took Paul and drew him out of the Temple, and went about to kill him; till the Captain came, whom when they saw, they left off beating of him; yea, more than four hundred confederated together, and resolved to kill him, Act. 23. 12.* Thus hath the Holy Ghost taken notice of this Practice of the wicked Enemies of God and his People, in those days; and that it was very common, in those days: The Apostle James intimated in the 2d. Chap. of his Epistle, v. 6, & 7. *Lieth he there, Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the Judgment Seat? do not they blaspheme that name by which ye are called?* These Interrogations, implies an Affirmation, that they did so, used so to do.

Neither here did their Envy and Enmity against the Saints in Old Testament times, nor against Christ and his Followers, in the New, end and proceed no further; no, they were never satisfied while any of those remained alive upon the Earth: like those *Acts* 22. 22. who cried out against Paul, in these words, *Away with such a Fellow from the Earth, for it is not fit he should live; right or wrong, let him be taken off the Earth*: They therefore persecuted them to the death; that did they delign, that did they pursue by all the before-mentioned ways: Nay, such was their bitter Enmity, that if the Magistrate at any time, seemed to be willing to acquit any of them because of their Innocency, they cried out upon him, away with him; and told Herod he was no Friend to Caesar, if he let him go; and that rather then Jesus should be acquitted, they desired a most notorious Criminal should be saved, even Barabbas, who for Sedition and Murther in the City, was cast into Prison; they preferred the most vile Men to that most innocent and unblamable One. Further instances of this too, the same divine Records hath delivered down; as the Apostle James said in the general, *Cap. 5. 6. of rich Men, Ye have condemned and killed the just, and he doth not resist you*. So said the Psalmist, *Psal. 37. The wicked hath drawn out the sword, v. 14. to slay such as be of an upright Conversation*: And again, in *Psal. 44. 22. For thy sake are we killed all the day long, we are counted as Sheep for the slaughter*: And more particularly, *Gen. 4. Cain* there having brought an Offering, and *Abel* another to the Lord, and the Lord respecting *Abels* and not *Cains*, *v. 3, 4, 5. Cain, v. 8. upon this very account, rose up against him, and slew him*. In like manner did Josephs Brethren intend to do with him, *Gen. 37. they perceiving that their Father loved him more than he did them, envied him, or hated him, v. 3, & 4. and in v. 18. Seeing him afar of, they conspired against him to slay him*; and *v. 20. said, Come now, let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, &c.* Nothing less than his Life would satisfy some of them at least; such was their Envy against their innocent Brother, in that day. *Jezabel, Ababs Wife*, after *Elijah* had caused the Prophets of *Baal* to be slain, *1 Kings 18. the Chap. 19. understanding the matter by the King, sent a Messenger to Elijah, in v. 2. saying, So let the gods do, and more also; if I make not thy life as the life of one of them, by to morrow about this time*; such was her hatred of him, that nothing but his Life was desired by her; but he fled. So *Hamans* fiery Enmity against *Mordicai*, could be no way quenched, but by his Life, and the Life of all the Jews, *Hester 9. 5, 6. when Mordicai would not bow, and give Haman reverence to him, he was full of wrath, and thought scorn to lay hands on Mordicai alone, but he and all the Jews must be destroyed together; which he pursued in the following verses. After the same manner did they pursue Christ himself to the death, John 18. and because the Jews themselves could not proceed so far as to put him to death by their Law, (as themselves confessed v. 31.) they therefore brought him before Pilate to be judged, that they might by pretence of that Authority put him to death, which afterwards they did, (tho so just a One as he was, and by Pilate declared so to be,) as is in the next Chap. recorded; yea, when Pilate would have released him, because of his Innocency, *Luke 23. 14, 15. the Jews cried out, v. 21. Crucifie him, Crucifie him; right or wrong they must have his life; this was in their hearts to have, as appears further, v. 22, 23. The Scribes and Pharisees having beforehand, Mat. 12. 14. taken counsel how they might destroy him. Christ did forewarn his Disciples and Followers, and intimated unto them, that they should be so dealt with too, Mat. 10. The Brother (saith he there, in v. 21.) shall deliver up the Brother to death, and the Father the Child, and the Children shall rise up against their Parents, and put them to death; according to which they frequently did in those days, as the Scripture doth evidence. When Christ had raised up Lazarus, John 11. 43, 44. The chief Priests, in Chap. 12. v. 10, 11. consulted, that they might put Lazarus also to death, because that by reason of him many of the Jews believed on Jesus; So Acts 5. because the Apostles had preached Christ before the Council there, they presently consulted to slay them, v. 33. The same Spirit was Saul of, Acts 8. 1. he there consented to the death of Stephen; and Acts 9. 1. its said of him, That he yet breathed out threatnings and slaughter against the Disciples of the Lord; which he himself acknowledged**

ledged he had done, *Act. 22. v. 4.* in these words, *I persecuted this way to the death, so dealt he and others with Stephen upon his preaching of Christ, Act. 7. They ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the City, and stoned him, v. 57, 58. Herod the King, Act. 12. Breathed forth his hand to vex certain of the Church, v. 1. and v. 2. he killeth James with the sword; yea, there were more than fourty of the Jews, who bound themselves in a curse not to eat or drink till they had killed Paul, v. 12, 13. of which they acquainted the chief Priests and Elders, and directed them in a way to effect it too, in the next verses: And again, Act. 25. The chief Priests and chief of the Jews designed to kill him, and in order to it, they desired the favour of Festus to send for Paul to Jerusalem, v. 1. and v. 3. 'tis said, That there were hers in wait in the way to kill him; thus did they pursue their very Lives by all their former Methods. For which doings, the Apostle complained, in his First Epistle to the Thessalonians, of the Jews, Chap. 2. v. 14, 15. thus, *The Jews who but killed the Lord Jesus, and their own Prophets, and have persecuted us, &c.* Thus hath the Scripture also taken notice, that their Enmity was such, that by way of revenge, nothing less would serve them than the very Lives of the Saints and Servants of God, yea, of Christ himself; in those days, they could not recall they had taken them off the Earth.*

Then Thirdly, As the Holy Ghost hath by Scripture Records, shewn the bitter Enmity that was seated in the Hearts of the wicked; in those days, against the Saints and Holiness it self; and the several Methods those Men then took, to express or evidence their Enmity against them and it, for their suppression and to hinder the growth of Holiness; so also hath the same Spirit deluded down to after Age, many of the Grounds and Causes of such their Enmity against, and hatred of them, and which put them upon Persecuting the one and Opposing the other.

The First and Original Cause why they did persecute at that rate in those days, was from that irreconcilable Enmity which they brought into the World with them against God, against Christ who came forth from him, against his Laws and Government, as is said, *Rom. 8. 7. The carnal mind is enmity against God, cannot be subject to him; they cannot endure any thing of the Spirit whilst they are in the Flesh, in the same State in which they came into the World; they cannot bear with the Light which shineth in the Law of God, because their Works are Works of Darkness; and hence came their Hearts to be at enmity and hatred against the Saints and Servants of God, such who owned God and his Laws, and subjected themselves to him and it, or did preach up Subjection to the same; and so consequently, to persecute their Persons, and oppose and obstruct the spreading of the Truth, by all the ways they could; as the Psalmist implied they did, when he spake in, *Psal. 2. thus, Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The Kings of the Earth set themselves, and the Rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his Anointed; saying, Let us break their Bands, and cast their Cords from us, &c.* they could not bear them, they would not be bound by them, v. 1, 2. Here their Enmity against God, and Christ and his Laws, put them upon imagining, taking counsel how to ease themselves of the good Men of God and Christ; and as a consequent, how to ease themselves of all those who did submit to those Laws of God and walk with him; as the Psalmist again did clearly assert, *Psal. 83. in these words, v. 2. Thine enemies make a Tumult, and they who hate thee lift up the head, v. 2. what follows, why, v. 3. they have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy bidden ones; and v. 4. they said, Come and let us cut them off from being a Nation; here first they hate God himself, and then consult to destroy his People. To this cause doth the Psalmist reduce it in those days, *Psal. 44. 22. For thy sake (saith he there,) are we killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter; it was for Gods sake they hated him, and must needs kill his whom they could reach. Jeremiah spake after the like manner, Chap. 15. v. 15. he prays thus, Revenge me of my Persecutors, &c. and useth this as the Argument, Know, (saith he,) that for thy sake have I suffered rebuke; it was for his faithfulness to God. So Christ told his Disciples, *Mat. 10. That they should be brought before Governors and Kings but for his name sake, v. 8. they****

hated

hated Christ, so punished his Followers; and again, *v. 24. It shall be hated of all men for my name's sake*; their hatred of Christ is assigned here, as the cause of their hatred against his Followers; as Christ further hinted to the Jews in the Parable he spake to them, *Luke 19.* concerning a Noble Man, *v. 12.* where in *v. 14.* he said, *That the Citizens hated him, and sent forth a Messenger after him, saying, We will not have this Man to reign over us.* The unbelieving Jews would have none of his Government, 'twas too strict for them; they hate him, and from thence 'twas that they could not endure such who either preached him up as Lord, or his Laws as that by which they ought to be ruled, or did submit themselves to him on it; and they persecuted them as intolerably, used all means to hinder the publication of his Laws, or him as Lord and Saviour, and to hinder others submission to him; and it is for which Christ pronounced against them, *Mat. 23. 13.* in these words, *We rejoyce Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites, for ye shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against Men; for ye neither go in your selves, neither suffer ye them who are entering to go in:* They from their hatred to Christ would not be subject to him and his Laws themselves, nor would they suffer others to be subject, but did oppose and persecute them, and contradict and blaspheme the Doctrine, persuading People to subjection to him; and because the Light which shone in his Life and Doctrine; and in his Followers, did discover and reprove their wicked Natures and Deeds of Darkness, it could not be born with; as Christ told his unbelieving Brethren, *John 7. The world cannot hate you, but me it hateth, v. 7. Why? Because (said he) I testify of it, that their works are evil:* Again, *John 3. 19, 20. Light is come into the world, but men love darkness rather than light. Why? Because their deeds are evil; for every one who doth evil, hateth the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd, or discovered.* Thus hath the Scripture assigned this to be the Original, or one main Cause of the wicked Ones Enmity against, and persecuting of the Saints, and their high opposition against the Light of the Gospel and true Holiness itself.

2dly. It did arise from this, That the Saints, the called of God, did evidence themselves to have been changed from what they were by Nature, and by Practice too; they owned and loved what formerly they had hated; they had declared themselves not to be of the World, could not run with the same excess of Riot with others, as they had done, do as formerly they did; but their Lives and Works did contradict and reprove the Lives of their Persecutors. Now this they could not bear, therefore did they hate them, and brake out against them in those various Methods and Ways before noted; as the Scripture saith, *He who doth evil, hateth the light, John 3. 20.* No sooner did *Saul* (whom they had so much loved formerly) leave his persecuting of the Saints, and being changed, did evidence the same by joyning with them, and in preaching up what his Heart had been against; but the Jews hated him, and studied to kill him, *Act. 9. 19, 20.* and so on; and that it would be so, Christ had told his before, *John 15. If (saith he here, v. 19) ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore doth the world hate you:* Here did he intimate to them, that no sooner should they evidence by their good Life, that they are called out of the World, and off from the evil Courses thereof, but the World hated them upon that very account, and thereupon persecuted them; as 'tis written *Habak. 1. 13.* in those days, *That the wicked devoured the men who were more righteous than be:* And 'tis expressly said, *Gen. 4. 5. That Cain was angry with his Brother Abel, because the Sacrifice Abel offered, was accepted and not his, and he, in v. 8. slew him;* altho the reason given of his Non-acceptance was, because he did not well, *v. 7.* and his Brother did; as the Holy Ghost doth affirm in these words, *1 John 3. 12. Not as Cain was of that wicked one, and slew his Brother; and wherefore slew he him? because his own Works were evil, and his Brothers righteous;* upon which account the Saints are exhorted, in the next verse, not to marvel, tho the World do hate them. When *Elijah* had but evidenced his Change, by reprov'ing King *Abaziah* for his sending to the God of *Eckron*, to enquire if he should recover, *2 Kings 1. v. 2, 3, 4.* the King was so enraged against him, that he *v. 9. sent a Captain, with his fifty to fetch him, and the*

Captain

*Captain and his men were destroyed by fire from Heaven; yet he sent another, and so he was destroyed, yet a third, in the next verses; such was his bitterness against Elijah for this cause only. So said the Psalmist also, Psal. 38. 19 and so on. They who hate me are multiplied, &c. They also who render evil for good are mine Adversaries, because I follow the thing which good is; there is the cause why wicked Men are adversaries to good Men, only because they are good now, and not such as formerly they were. So again, Psal. 37. 12. The wicked (saith the Psalmist,) plotech against the just; and v. 14. They have drawn out the sword to slay such as be of an upright Conversation. So said Amos 100, Chap. 5. 10. They hate him who reproveth in the gate, they abhor him who speaketh uprightly, and v. 12. They afflicted the just; Here the Scripture assigned no other cause, why these Men did envy, hate and persecute them, but this, that those hated and persecuted Ones were just, righteous and good, and reproved their Persecutors for the contrary; this was sufficient to render them obnoxious to the wickedst hatred and scorn. Herod in those days, committed John to Prison, and would have put him to death, because John had told him, in what was lawful to marry his Brother Philips Wife, Mat. 14. 3, 4, 5. The Apostle Peter declared this too in his time, 1 Epist. Chap. 4. speaking of the unconverted Gentiles thoughts of the converted Ones, because they could not do as they had done, and as the wicked still did, v. 3, 4. in these words, *Therefore they think it strange, that ye run not with them into the same acts of Rye, speaking evil of you;* Here they speak evilly of the Saints, because they could not be so wicked as they; they wondered at their change, could no longer think or speak well of them. So that the Scripture doth make it evident, that the wicked unbelieving Ones did in those days, hate and persecute the Saints as Saints, and only because they were new Creatures, called out of the World. Men of a good Life could not be and do as others did, or do as they themselves sometimes had done; by which they did reprove the Spirits and Doing of those wicked Persecutors.*

3dly. A third cause or ground which the Holy Ghost in Scripture hath assigned, from whence the Envy and persecuting Spirits of wicked Men did arise; that was the Pride, height of Spirit, and revengeful Nature which was in them: Such was their Heide, that they would not seek God themselves, nor bear with those who did, as the Psalmist said, Psal. 10. 4. *That the wicked through the pride of his countenance, will not seek God;* and in v. 8. is said of him, *That in the secret places doth he murder the innocent, his eyes are privily set against the poor;* as their Pride here would not permit them to seek God, so it set them against the Saints, innocent Ones who did seek God. The Psalmist again, Psal. 119. 69. said, *The proud have forged a lie against me:* And again, Psal. 123. 4. he saith, *Our Soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of them who are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud:* Here the Holy Ghost takes notice, that the Pride of their Hearts did render the Saints the objects of their Scorn, and put them upon forging of lies against them. This very thing set Haman into so great hatred against Mordicai, and made him so resolute on revenge against him and all the Jews, Hester 3. his proud Heart could not bear with Mordicai, because he did not arise and do him Reverence, as is expressed v. 5. in these words, *When Haman saw that Mordicai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath;* and in the next verse, *He thought scorn to lay hands on Mordicai alone, but sought to destroy all the Jews with him;* such were his revengeful Purposes from the dreadful Pride of his Heart. Hence it came to pass that the Presidents and Princes in Daniels time, so much hated him, studied to revenge, and took those courses to execute it upon him; Dan. 6. He being now advanced by King Darius over all the Presidents and Princes, v. 1, 2. their proud hearts could not bear it; and this put them upon seeking occasion against him concerning the Kingdom, v. 4. and finding none; so good a Subject and innocent Man was he; they in the next verses resolves to take him in the matters of his God, procured a Law, and pursued him in the ways they had devised, till they had gotten him into the Lions Den, tho the King himself would have saved him. From the like pride of Heart the Libertines and others, who were disputing with Stephen, Act. 6. and not able v. 9. to resist

resist the spirit and wisdom by which he spake, nor able to bear to be silenced by Stephen; they in the next verses evidenced their Pride and revengeful Spirits; they confute him by *suborning Witnesses, stirring up the People, Elders and Scribes against him, caught him and carried him before the Council.* The like Spirit did the Jews evidence in those days, in their Behaviour towards the Man who was born blind, *John 9.* when he had by such convincing Arguments which they could not resist, proved Christ to be of God, *v. 30.* and so on: The Pride of the Pharisees being such, that they could not bear to be put to silence by such a poor unlearned Man as he was; therefore they *v. 34.* took this course; they first say to him, *Thou wast altogether born in sin, and dost thou teach us?* And they Excommunicated him: Having no better Argument, they confuted him this way, and revenged upon him after this sort. Thus hath the Scripture noted, that the wicked Ones envy against good Men often did arise from the Pride of their Hearts and revengeful Nature.

4thly. A fourth cause or ground from whence they so maligned and persecuted the Saints, Christ himself and his Followers, in those days did arise from their great ignorance of God himself, of Christ; and of the Saints, in persecuting of whom they persecuted Christ, as he told *Saul, Act. 9. 4.* As 'tis said of Pharaoh, *Exod. 5. 2.* *Who is the Lord that I should let Israel go? I know not the Lord* (said he,) *therefore I will not let Israel go;* his ignorance of God here, made him oppress and grieve Gods People still, and pursue them afterwards. So it was with *Saul, Act. 9.* when Christ had said, *Why persecutest thou me?* *Saul answered, Who art thou, Lord?* *v. 4, 5.* Here his ignorance of Jesus was the cause why he persecuted him and his Saints. Christ intimates this also to be the cause why the Jews hated him and persecuted him to the death; *Luke 23.* when they were Crucified for him, he there prays for them in these words, *v. 34.* *Father forgive them for they know not what they do.* Had they known him (saith the Scripture,) *they would not have crucified the Lord of glory,* *1 Cor. 2. 8.* Their ignorance here was the cause of their persecuting Acts, and of their malignant Mind against him and his. The Psalmist took it for granted, that in those days it did proceed from hence, *Psal. 14. 4.* thus he said, *Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge, who eat up my people as they eat bread?* Which Saying strongly implies, that had they had knowledge they would not; they could not have done so. The Apostles also in their time, did intimate the like, and assigned the Ignorance of the Jews to be the cause of their malignity against Christ and his, *Act. 3.* they tell them *v. 15.* *That they had killed the Prince of life;* but *v. 17.* saith to them thus, *Now Brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it; as did also your Rulers:* And again, *Act. 13.* said the Apostle to them in *v. 27.* *That they who dwell at Jerusalem, and their Rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the Prophets, (which are read every Sabbath-day,) they have fulfilled them in condemning him;* and in *v. 28.* *That they found not cause of death in him, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain.* Upon the same Foundation of Ignorance, Paul acknowledgeth that he went, *Act. 26.* *I verily thought with my self, v. 9.* *that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus.* The Jews themselves *John 9.* did own their ignorance of Christ, *v. 29.* (said they,) *As for this Fellow we know not from whence he is; all the undeniable Evidences they had had, that he was of God, did not enlighten them nor convince them, therefore they persisted to envy and persecute him; and as to such who professed to own him, many desired him, Titus 1. 16.* *being unto every good work reprobate, (or void of Judgment).* In like manner the Scripture declared, that afterwards they persecuted and hated good Men upon this account, or from hence, that they knew not God, Christ, or them; *1 Jo. 3. 1.* *Therefore the world knoweth him not, because it knew not him;* and as Christ had told his Disciples, *John 15. 20.* *If they persecute me, they will also persecute you;* and in the next verses gives the reason of it in these words, *All these things will they do unto you for my name sake, because they know not him who sent me:* So again, *John 16.* *The time cometh* (said Christ there,) *v. 2.* *that whosoever killeth you, shall think he doth God good service;* the reason of which he gives in the next verse, in these words, *These things will*

will they do, because they have not known the Father, nor me. From this Root also, doubtless it came to pass, that the Christians in that Age were called a Sect, *Act. 28.* and were so much spoken against every where; as *Pauls* Countrymen said, *v. 2. We desire (said they to him,) to hear of thee what thou thinkest, for as concerning this Sect, we know that every where 'tis spoken against;* right or wrong they speak against them and their way, because they understood them not nor it. *Peter* in general assigns this as the cause of Mens speaking evil of many things, *2 Pet. 2. 12. Those* (saith he, speaking there of wicked Men,) *as natural brute Beasts, &c. speak evil of the things which they understood not;* nay, 'tis marvellous, that the malice of the *Jews* against *Christ* did so blind them, that when *Judas* came to them, and acknowledged to them that he had betrayed innocent Blood, *Mat. 27. 3, 4. They say, What is that to us? look thou to that;* when they had been the chief Instruments in the betraying of him, and putting him to death. Thus doth the Scripture Records note this Cause among others, of which Mens envy against *Christ* himself, and his Followers in those days, against the Saints of old before his time, and why they persecuted them.

5thly. A fifth cause or ground yet, which the same Scripture doth assign or declare of these their Spirits and Doings, was from a causeless and carnal Fear which they had conceived; that if the Saints of old, *Jesus Christ* and his Followers, in those days, were suffered amongst them, or if their Doctrine should have prevailed, then these would grow to big for them, and would withdraw their subjection from their Rulers, Rebel, usurp Authority, and would be had in greatest Esteem and Repute by the People, and so derogate from the Honor, Esteem, Authority and Rule of those who did thus envy and persecute them; they were ready to think that all Men would believe on *Christ*, and that all the World would go after him, if they should have let Him and his Followers alone, and should not have stopped their course, as they did declare, *John 11. 48. If we let him thus alone* (said they there,) *all men will believe on him, and the Romans shall come and take away both our Place and Nation:* And again, *John 12. 19.* (they said.) *Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him;* thus did their causeless Jealousie work to Envy and Hatred, and Persecution. This made the Chief Priests and Scribes so highly displeased, *Mat. 23.* when they had seen *Christ* to have such Esteem among the People, and the same so evidenced by the multitudes spreading of their Garments, decking the Ways where he did ride, with Branches, and crying out *Hosanna* to the Son of David, *blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the Highest, v. 8, 9, 15.* and upon this, they *v. 23.* demanded of *Christ*, *by what authority he did those things?* as if he were about to usurp Authority, or at least that he did it against or without Authority. Particular instances of this cause or ground too, not a few the Scripture takes notice of, as in *Exod. 1.* The King there was (without cause,) jealous that the *Jews* there would grow too great and numerous, and Rebel, therefore consulted to prevent their increase by dealing hardly with them; his Jealousie is expressed *v. 9, 10.* in these words, *The Children of Israel are more and mightier than we. Come, let us deal wisely with them lest they multiply, and it come to pass that when there shall be out any War, they join also to our Enemies and fight against us.* This causeless Fear put him upon dealing cruelly with them, in order to prevent their growth, as in the following verses; upon which account also *Josephs* Brethren went, *Gen 37.* they suspecting by his Dreams, and his Fathers shew of love to him, that *Joseph* would be greater than they, *v. 4.* and the *8, & 11.* they thereupon are said there, *to hate him, and envy him;* and *v. 19, 20.* of the same Chap. *they consulted to slay him:* They could not bear with the thoughts of this, that he should be greater than they in his Fathers Heart, nor superior unto them in after-times, which they had guessed his Dreams did intimate that he should be; therefore they hate him, and resolve to prevent the coming thereof to pass, by taking away of his Life; tho God purposed to advance *Joseph* to save them alive, as *Joseph* afterwards told them, *Gen. 45. 5.* This Spirit is taken notice of also in *Josua* from the same ground, in *Moses* time, *Numb. 31. 26. When Eldad and Medad had prophesied in the*

the Camp, the young man presently (thinking Moses was clouded somewhat by this,) told Moses on't, v. 27. and v. 28. said, *My Lord, Moses forbid them*; which Spirit of Envy in Joshua, and the cause on't too Moses perceived, and blamed him for it, in these words, in the next verses, *Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the Lords people were Prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them all*; doubtless, Joshua here thought that none should have the honor of a Spirit of Prophecie but Moses; or if they had, they should not shew it, as being eclipsing to Moses Glory; and this stirred up this Envy in him. For this cause also did Saul eye and envy David in that day, and sought his Life; David had gotten far into the opinion of his Fellow Subjects, through his prudent Behavior in the Kings business; and Saul feared that he would usurp the Kingdom too doubtless, which he intimated in these words, 1 Sam. 18. *When the Women came after the overthrow of the Philistines, singing, in v. 6, 7. that Saul had slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands, he v. 8. was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, they have ascribed to David his ten thousand, and to me thousand, and can he have more but the Kingdom?* The Effect followeth in the next verses; Saul from that day following eyed David, and resolved and endeavored to kill him; and Chap. 19. 1. *He gave order to his Son and Servants to kill him.* Yea, he was also wroth with his Son Jonathan upon the same grounds, for Jonathans sake, 1 Sam. 19. when Jonathan had been excusing Davids abience, v. 28, 29. *Sauls anger was kindled against Jonathan, v. 30. and he said unto him, Do not I know that thou hast chosen the Son of Jesse to thine own confusion, &c.* and in the next verse, he said, *As long as the Son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy Kingdom; wherefore send and fetch him to me, for he shall surely die:* Here Sauls apprehension that David did eclipse his Glory, and that the People had too much esteem for David, and that he might prove disloyal and usurp the Kingdom, and that it could not be sure to him or his Son if David lived, was the great cause of his envy and malice against David, and his pursuing of his Life; altho David had fully evidenced his Duty and Loyalty to Saul all along; and eminently in that, when Saul had been twice in the power of his hands, that he might have slain him, he would not hurt him, not revenge himself, yea, and rescued him from those with him who would have done it; all which Saul himself acknowledged, as it is at large 1 Sam. 24. 4, 5, 6, 17. Chap. 26. 8, 9, 10, 11, 25. After the same manner did Herod the King against Christ in those days, and from the same cause or ground, Mat. 2. He having heard that Christ was born, and that some had come to him to worship him, v. 1, 2, 3. *He was troubled and all Jerusalem with him:* He now began to be jealous, that this Christ the King of the Jews, might possibly take away his Power or lessen him, and he thereupon resolves to prevent it; and v. 8. sends to enquire after him, under pretence that he would worship him, but (as is evident by the Sequel,) it was that he might kill him; for v. 16. it is said, *That when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, he was very wrath, and sent forth, and slew all the Children which were in Bethlehem, and the coasts thereof, from two years old and upwards, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men:* Here, rather than he would endanger his Honor and Authority, (which he had causelessly feared if Christ lived,) he (that he might be sure to hit Christ,) shed the innocent Blood of many Children. Upon the same grounds went the Chief Priests and Pharisees, in John 11. 47, 48. in their envy against, and persecuting of Christ; said they in their Council, *What do we do? for this man doth many miracles. If we let him alone all men will believe on him; and the Romans shall come and take away both our Place and Nation:* Here were they jealous, that if Christ did go on, he would get such Esteem and Honor, that it would endanger their Honor and Authority too, that they should be lessened among the People; and this set them at enmity against Christ, and upon persecuting of him, and using of all means to render Him and his Doctrine contemptible, and not to be endured. Upon this account too, the Adversaries of the Jews dealt so with them; Ezra 4. They (hearing that the Jews were building the Temple, v. 1.) presently in the 12, & 13. and following verses, conceived a causeless Fear that these would Rebel, withhold the Kings due,

and dishonor the King; and so did they tell the King in these words, *The Jews are come unto Jerusalem building the rebellious and bad City, &c. Be it known unto the King, That if this City be builded, &c. they will not pay Tole, &c. and it is not meet for us to see the King dishonored;* which Letter of theirs begot the like jealousy in the King; and thereupon he commanded their Work to cease, *v. 20, 21.* So also 'tis recorded of the Jews themselves, that they suspected Christ (because he was called *King of the Jews*;) that he would grow too great, and vail their Glory; and therefore did they persecute and hate him; therefore did they tell Pilate thus, *John 19. 12. If thou let this man go thou art not Cæsars Friend; for whosoever maketh himself a King, speaketh against Cæsar;* and *v. 15.* when Pilate said to them, *Shall I Crucifie your King?* they answered, *We have no King but Cæsar:* So did their fear of their own falling into Infamy and Disgrace amongst the People, cause them also to hinder the preaching of Christ to be the *Messiah*; and to have been risen from the Dead, by all the means they could, and to persecute the Preachers of the Gospel; for they knew well, that if the People should once believe that indeed he was the Christ, the Son of God, all those who had had a hand in persecuting and slaying him, would have been judged murderers of him; (as the Apostle *Act. 5.* did affirm they were, *v. 30.*) and so all their Honor and Credit amongst the People; that this was upon their Heart, the Holy Ghost in the same Chap. notes, *v. 24.* 'tis said, *When the Chief Priests and the Captain of the Temple had heard what the Apostles had preached, and done in this Name of Jesus, they doubted of them whereto this would grow;* and *v. 27, 28. They took them and brought them before the Council; and the High Priest asked them, saying, Did not we straitly command you, that you should not teach in this name? and behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your Doctrine, and intend to bring this mans Blood upon us;* of which, tho they had been guilty of, yet would they not that notice should be taken of that wickedness, lest they should fall into disrepute amongst the People. Upon this ground also was it, that *Haman* hated *Mordicai* at that rate; and sought his Life; he thought that *Mordicai* clouded his Honor, and further feared that *Mordicai* might get some favor at Court, because he remained still in the Kings Gate and would not bow to him; therefore did *Hamans* jealous Heart work how to destroy him; as is expressed, *Ester 3.* it is said there, *v. 5. That when Haman saw that Mordicai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath;* and thereupon in the following verses, he attempts both his and his, and all the Jews destruction: Here the fear of the deminution of his Honor, or obstructing of the height he aspired too, put him upon hating of *Mordicai*, and endeavoring his ruin; as is yet more plain from his own words, *Chap. 5.* after he had given an account to his Friends there, throughout the beginning of the Chapter, of all his Honor and Favor at Court, and other his Advantages; he *v. 13.* spake thus, *All this waileth me nothing, so long as I see Mordicai the Jew sitting at the Kings Gate;* strongly did his Jealousie work within him; lest *Mordicai* should be in Favor and check his; that all he had availed him nothing, therefore makes a Gallows to hang *Mordicai* on in the next verse. This was this noted to have been one cause, why Men (wicked Ones) have hated and persecuted others, in those Ages of the World.

Secondly, A sixth ground of their wrath and violence against good Men and Things in those days, and of which the Scriptures give us an account, was the blind Zeal of some, for the Heathenish and Idolatrous Worship; others for that Religion they were born and bred up in, the Traditions, Ceremonies and Customs of the Jews, of which they were so tender and so jealous of loosing or altering, that they could not bear with the appearance of any thing which looked that way, but presently did fly out into rage and violence against all Men and Doctrines that seemed to thwart it, or like to disgrace or disparage it; as it was said of Israel of old, *2 Chron. 36. v. 14. That the chief of the Priests and the Prophets transgressed very much, after all the abominations of the Heathen, and polluted the house of the Lord, &c.* and they had habituated themselves so to do, that this was the effect, *v. 15. Thus when God had sent to them by his Messengers, because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place; They v. 16. mocked the messengers of God, despised his word,*

and misused his Prophets: Their custom to worship in that false way, made them now not able to bear with a reproof or persuation, to return to worship again after the way which God himself had prescribed; so zealous were they for that which they had been used to in those days; therefore did they persecute and misuse the Messengers, whom God had sent to have turned them from their Heathenish way of worshipping; which also the Psalmist noted in his time, *Psalm 2.* He prophesied that which should come to pass in Christs time, *Why (saith he there,) do the beaten rage, and the people imagin a vain thing? The Kings of the earth set themselves, and the Rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his Anointed, saying, Lets break their bands assunder, and cast away their cords from us:* When the Lords Anointed should come, he would by his Laws alter the Jewish ways of worshipping, according to their old Law, Traditions and Customs, and introduce a new, as the Law of God before did contradict and forbid the Heathen Worship, which neither the one nor the other could bear with (while unconverted); therefore would they rage, imagin and take counsel against God and Christ, how to break their Bands, and to cast away their Cords; they would none of Christs Government or Laws; of which also Christ himself in his days spake to his Disciples, *John 16. v. 2.* that this blind Zeal should put them upon killing of the Opposers thereof; *The time cometh (saith he there,) that whosoever killeth you, will think he doth God good service:* Their opinion of their own false Way, should be so strong, that it should prompt them to destroy any who should preach or practice the contrary, as for instance it came to pass. Such was Pauls Zeal before his Conversion, *Acts 8.* tis said of him, *v. 3.* *That he made havoc of the Church, entering into every house, and haling men and women, and committing them to prison,* the cause of which, was his zeal for his Religion, as himself acknowledged, *Acts 22. 3. 4.* in these words, *I was zealous towards God as ye all at this day; and I persecuted this way unto the death, &c.* All this, as the consequent of his mistaken Zeal, as he said, *Acts 26. v. 9.* *I verily thought with my self, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus, which things I also did;* and the particulars he named in the next verses, *Being exceeding mad against them, I persecuted them, &c.* And again, *Gal. 1. 13.* he declared it in these words, *Ye have heard of my Conversation in times past in the Jews Religion, that beyond measure I persecuted the Church of God and wasted it;* The grounds and reasons stirring him up hereto, was his mistaken Zeal, as he himself saith in the next verse, in these words, *And profited in the Jews Religion above many of mine equals in mine own Nation, being more exceeding zealous of the Tradition of my Fathers:* Here, his blind Zeal, he verily thought he ought to do as he did, (he having been bred up in the strict observation of the Law, and of the Jewish Traditions and Customs,) made him so exceeding mad against all such whose Doctrin or Practice was otherwise; could not bear with any alteration or turning out of his accustomed way, nor with any who did walk, profess or teach otherwise; therefore was he so violent in persecuting of Christians, and in his endeavors to hinder the spreading of the Gospel, till Christ met with him, and convinced him to purpose of his mistaken zeal. Another instance of this is noted by Daniel, in his days, *Dan. 3.* When the King there had set up an Image, *v. 1.* and dedicated it, *v. 3.* and in the following verses, proclaimed that all should at such times fall down and worship: And the Chaldeans great zeal for this Idolatry put them upon accusing Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, &c. for not worshipping this Image as the Chaldeans did worship; this also set the King into a great rage too against them, (such was his zeal also); yea, to such a degree too, that when they had utterly denied to worship the Image, he commanded the Furnace to be heat seventy times hotter, and they to be cast in, which was executed *v. 21.* So hot was he for his Image worship, that the Non-complyers must die for it. Upon the like ground also did the Scribes and Pharisees quarrel with Christ and his Disciples in those days, *Mat. 15.* *Why say they there to Christ, do thy Disciples transgress the Traditions of the Elders? for they wash not their hands, when they eat Bread, v. 2.* Their Heat and Fervor for their Religion and Traditions put them upon this Cavelling, tho Christ had told them, that they by their Traditions had made void the Law of God; this

this Tradition and Custom of theirs is set forth in *Mark* 7. 3, 4. thus, *That the Pharisees and the Jews except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the Traditions of the Elders; and when they came from the Market, except they washed they would not eat; and many other things there be which they have received to hold, as the washing of Cups and Pots, Brasen-vessels, and of Tables (or Beds).* Their Heart engagedness to these Ways and Traditions received of their Father, made them quarrel at Christ and his Followers for not observing of them: So again, for not-observing the Sabbath, *Mat.* 12. they said, *Behold, thy Disciples do that which is not lawful to do on the Sabbath day,* v. 2. And this put them upon endeavoring to ensnare Christ by questions, and take counsel against him how they might destroy him; they could not bear with such who did not as they did in these matters in these days. The Philosophers were so addicted to their Idols, *Act.* 17. that they despised Paul and his Doctrine, and said, v. 14. *What will this babler say, he seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods;* and v. 19, 20. they said, *May we know what this new Doctrine whereof thou speakest is? For thou bringest certain things; we would know therefore what these things mean.* These could not bear with the preaching up the true God; they being worshipers of Idols, the true God was a strange God to them; and what Paul had preached were strange things, because contrary to what they had been bred up in; and their zeal was so hot for their false Worship, that they despised and persecuted such as offered the true; they took Paul here, and carried him before the highest Court, where they put these questions to him: After the same manner did the Jews with Paul upon this ground too, *Act.* 18. 11. He having before preached Jesus Christ to them at Corinth, *They here with one accord made an insurrection against him, and brought him to the Judgment Seat, saying, This Fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the Law:* Here now was the great ground of their Enmity and Violence against him; they could not bear to have Men worship God in any other way, than in that which they had usually worshiped according to the Law and their Traditions, nor bear with any Persuasions thereunto; such was their blind zeal for that wherein they had been educated and used to. Their old received Customs were more valued by them than the Laws of God; tho God was then to be worshiped otherwise, as Christ had hinted to them; and as the Apostle Paul, *Act.* 24. there confessed before the Governor that he did, v. 14. in these words, *After the way they call Heresie, so worship I the God of my Fathers, believing all things written in the Law and the Prophets:* But because he did dissent from their Traditions and Customs, and worshiped not as they did, therefore called they his Way Heresie; and they persecuted him as in the beginning of the Chapter and before, altho it was according to what was written in the Law and the Prophets. So again, *Act.* 21. *The Jews there, v. 27. stirred up the People, and laid bands on Paul, and v. 28. cried out, this is the man who teacheth all men every where against the People, and the Law, and this Place:* This was the great thing which moved them here; Paul had taught the People to worship God otherwise than according to the Ceremonies of the Law, the Customs and Traditions of the Jews, wherein they had been so long conversant; and this they could not bear with. The Admirers of Diana did so too, *Act.* 19. when the Silversmith there had (tho upon another account,) insinuated, that the Apostles did design by their Presching, to disgrace and render their Goddess Diana contemptible, v. 24, 25. and so on. These Adorers of Diana were very wroth upon the hearing on't, and the whole City was filled with confusion, crying up Diana; O they could not bear with any thing which they had apprehended to have any tendency to the lessening of their so much admired Diana, which quickly put them into an unanswerable upore and violence against Pauls Companions, whom they had caught, v. 28. and soon, as the Town Clerk himself had told them, v. 37, 38. and so on. Thus the Scripture hath taken notice of this Cause also of the Enmity in the Breasts of wicked Men, and of their persecuting Spirit against the Saints in those days.

7thly. There was yet a seventh cause or rise of the Enmity and persecuting Practices of these against the Saints, which those divine Records hath set down in it; that was the private Profit and Gain that some Men had by some Religion then professed, or some other Way then in esteem a-

mongst the People ; which Gain being by Christ or the Apostles, preaching of the truth, abated, or in danger of being gone ; they were set in a rage against the Truth, and against all those who preached it, or believed and embraced it ; they could not bear with the thoughts of their Gain being taken away ; therefore did persecute and endeavor to destroy the Apostles and others, and used all means to prevent the spreading of their Doctrins. This very thing put the Silversmiths upon stirring up the People, who were the great Adorers of *Diana*, *Act. 19*. Not their zeal for *Diana* so much, as for their Profit : When *Paul* there had preached in *Asia*, and turning People from the worshiping of false gods ; the Silversmiths presently apprehending that this would bring *Diana* their Goddess, into disesteem, that People would not worship her any more, and then farewell their Gain ; which matter so troubled them, that 'tis said thus there, *v. 23*. *That there was no small stir about this way* ; and in the next verses, *That Demetrius who made the Silver Shrines to Diana, brought no small gain to the Craftsmen, whom he called together, and said unto them, Ye know that by this craft we have our wealth ; and Paul hath said, They be no gods which are made with hands ; so that not only our craft is in danger, but Diana would be despised ;* which Saying proved sufficient to beget an Enmity in the Breasts of the Craftsmen against the Apostles and that Doctrin, and to set them upon persecuting of them, as in the following verses they did ; for they very well knew, that if once the People did believe that the Religion and Worship they were found in were not right, *Diana* no Goddess ; and that all their Zeal in and for that way, was no better than Vanity, Superstition and Idolatry ; then no body would employ them to make Silver Shrines for *Diana* any more, and consequently they must take leave of their old Gain ; this now set them into such a flame of Envy and Violence against the Apostles and their Preaching. From the very same cause were the Masters of the Damsel, who was possessed with the Spirit of Divination stirred up against *Paul* and *Sylas*, and did persecute them, *Act. 16. 16*. 'tis there said, *That a certain Damsel possessed with a Spirit of Divination met us, who brought her master much gain by soothsaying, whom Paul, in v. 18. cast out ; upon which her masters, in the next verses, caught Paul and Sylas, and drew them unto the Rulers unto the Magistrates, saying, These being Jews do exceedingly trouble our City and teach Customs, &c. Upon which the multitude rose up against them, and the Magistrates commanded them to be beaten, which they did, and put them into Prison.* The main cause of all these Accusations and Complaints against them, and of their Imprisonment and Beating, was only the loss of that Gain the Damsel had brought her Masters ; as 'tis expressly said, *v. 19*. in these words, *And when her masters saw that the hope of their gain was gone, they caught Paul, &c.* Thus hath the Scripture also taken notice of this cause too, why some in those Ages of the World, did hate and persecute the Saints.

8thly. Yet further, these divine Records hath taken notice of an eighth cause or spring from whence ill Mens Spirits were moved against the good, or from whence many were engaged in persecuting and destroying of them ; that was from a fear of, or desire to please and gratifie others ; some great Men, or Men of Power, who were themselves full of Envy and Malice against the Saints, and did persecute them ; and thereby to secure to themselves the good opinion of those still, tho otherwise against their own judgments and inclinations, and it may be against convictions too, that in so doing they did not well ; as the Scripture speaks it was in Christs time, *John 12. 42*. Some great ones there did believe on Christ ; but 'tis expressly said, *That because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should have been put out of the Synagogue ;* and the reason in the next verse, is given for it further ; *For (tis said,) they loved the praise of Men more than the praise of God :* And doubtless, these who would not loose the praise of Men, did sit and judge with their Fellow Rulers, when they persecute Christ and his Followers, whatever their own thoughts on't were ; their desire to abide in the good opinion of the Great Ones, and their fear of being frowned upon by them, put them upon thus doing against such of whom they had good thoughts : And as the Elders and Nobles dwelling in the City where *Naboth* lived, did obey the wicked command of *Jezebel*, in *Abahs* name, *1 Kings 21*. They feared no doubt, the displeasing or loosing the Favor of *Jezebel* or *Abah* ;

Abas; therefore executed that wicked Command against innocent *Naboth*, as in *v. 8, 9.* and following verses; *Jezebel there writes in the Kings name and under his seal, and sent it to these Nobles and Elders, that they should proclaim a Fast, for Naboth on high, and set two witnesses, Sons of Belial before him, saying, Thou didst blaspheme God and the King; and then to carry him out and stone him*, which the Elders and Nobles readily did, rather than they would run the hazard of falling into the King or Queens disfavor; altho they knew in so doing, they did shed innocent Blood most unjustly, under the notion of a judicial Proceeding, *v. 12, 13.* and no other cause of their execution of this wicked Commandment can be assigned with any probability. So *Herod* in his days, from this very Root did deal so with *John the Baptist*, *Mat. 14.* He *v. 10. sent and beheaded John the Baptist in Prison*; and the Evangelist there in the former verses, give this as the cause, or that which put him upon so doing; he having formerly promised to the Daughter of *Herodias*, that she should have whatsoever she should have asked, *v. 7.* and she *v. 8. asking Johns head*; 'tis expressly said *v. 9. That the King was very sorry: nevertheless, for the Oaths sake and them whoset at meat with him, he commanded it to be done*: Here *Herods* unwillingness to displease his Company, took away *Johns* life; that did influence him here to do, what otherwise he would not have done. And again, it is said of *Herod*, *Act. 12. 1. That he stretched forth his hand to vex certain of the Church*, *v. 2. He killed James with the sword; and v. 3. because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also*; To persecute the Church was a matter so light to him, that he could do it upon so small a motive as the pleasing of the *Jews*, who were fixed in their Enmity against *Christ*, his Disciples and Doctrin before, as he well knew. In like manner did *Felix* with *Paul* upon the same motive, *Act. 24. 26, 27. Having sent for Paul often; and when another Governor came in Felix room, he left Paul bound, (tho he knew him to be innocent,) upon this ground only, as 'tis expressly said, That Felix willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound*. The pleasing of the persecuting *Jews*, was of sufficient force to persuade him to leave *Paul* bound. So is it said of *Festus* himself, *Act. 25. Paul* having pleaded his own Innocency before him, *Festus* to gratifie the desire of the *Jews*, (who had a design to have killed *Paul* in the way,) persuadeth *Paul* not to have stood to his Appeal, but to go to *Jerusalem*; the *Jews* desire and design is expressed in *v. 2, & 3.* in these words, *The High Priest and the Chief of the Jews informed him against Paul, and desired favor against him; that he would send for him to Jerusalem, laying wait in the way to kill him; upon which Festus v. 9 (moved thereto only upon this account, that he thereby might please the Jews,) would have exposed Paul to their intended Violence, as 'tis expressed there in these words, But Festus willing to do the Jews a pleasure, answered Paul and said, Wilt thou go up unto Jerusalem: Pilate also under the same Temptation, (being willing to keep the favor of Caesar, and loath to be accounted Disloyal; the Jews having urged that Argument,) did deliver up Christ to be Crucified, as is fully expressed John 19. for he had acknowledged Christs innocency often, as in Chap. 18. v. 38. in these words, I find in him no fault at all; and in Chap. 19. v. 4. Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him; the same words again he said to them, Yea, and v. 12. he sought to release him; But the Jews then in the next words, crying out, if thou let this man go thou art not Caesars friend; which when Pilate had heard, their clamour prevailed: Here was he touched when nothing else would prevail by Argument of force, to cause him to deliver up Jesus to be Crucified; this was, he either for fear of losing Caesars favor, being thought no Friend of his, or to please the Jews, did that which was otherwise against his own judgment and inclination; for in *Mark 15. 15.* 'tis said, *That he did it to please the multitude*; so that both seemed to be upon his Heart. Thus hath the Scripture also taken notice, that fear of Flattery was often the main cause which put many Persons upon the unjust and cruel Persecuting of innocent and good Men, and to assist others therein, when nothing else would have influenced to such Doings.*

In the fourth and last place, the Scripture is not silent neither, in setting forth the desperateness of such a Spirit of Enmity, and of such persecuting Practices in those wicked Men, in those Ages of the

the World. First, In that it sheweth, that God himself and Christ did take themselves to be concerned in all that which was done against his People: And Secondly, It declared the many direful Threatnings against such Persecutors; as also the sad Effects and Consequents of such Doings. And First, It sets forth how much God and Christ reasons themselves concerned therewith, as he was for his People under the burthen laid upon them in Egypt, *Exod. 3. God said, v. 7. I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt; and I have heard their cry, by reason of their Taskmasters: for I know their sorrow; and in the next verse, I am come down to deliver them; of which God told Moses again, v. 9. Here is observed what notice God took on't, and how he was concerned about it. So again, Psal. 105. 'tis said of Israel there by the Psalmist, v. 13, 14, 15. That when they went from one nation to another, &c. he suffered no man to do them wrong; yea, he reprov'd Kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not my Anointed, and do my Prophets no harm. Isaiah records these words, Chap. 63. 8, 9. He was their Saviour: in all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the Angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, &c. Here were great Expressions of his care and concernedness for them. God himself by the Prophet Zachariah spake thus concerning them, Chap. 2. v. 8. He who toucheth you, toucheth the Apple of mine eye; and in v. 9. he saith of their Enemies, Behold, I will shake mine hand upon them, &c. So did Christ himself declare his concernedness for the Church, when Saul had persecuted them, *Act. 9. 1, 2, 3. Christ met him in the way; and in the next verses uttered these words, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? Who art thou, said Saul: I am Jesus whom thou persecutest; it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks: Here Christ evidenced himself to be neerly concerned for his Saints; and also he hinted to Saul the danger of persecuting too, It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.**

Then Secondly, The Scripture Records, the many direful Threatnings against such Persecutors in those days, and declared the many sad Effects and Consequents of such doing in those Ages of the World. In the general, God said, *Deut. 32. v. 43. That he will revenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to the adversaries: And again, Psal. 7. 13. He hath ordained his arrows against the Persecutors. Yea, thus spake he to his People Israel in particular, by the Prophet Isaiah, Chap. 10. O my people, &c. be not afraid of the Assyrians, he shall smite thee with a rod, v. 24. and in v. 25, &c. 26. For yet a little while and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger, in their destruction; and the Lord of hosts shall stir up a scourge for him, according to the slaughter of Midian: Yea, and tho their stout Hearts would not take notice of Gods Hand lifted up against them, *Isa. 26. yet God said there, That they should see and be ashamed for their envy at the people, (or towards my people); yea, (said he there,) the fire of thine enemies shall devour them, v. 11. Again, Isa. 51. I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again, but I will put it into the hands of them who afflict thee, who said to thy soul, bow down that we may go over, &c. v. 22, 23. Here God, tho he did permit his Peoples Enemies sometimes to lay the Rod on his, yet the Dregs of the Cup the Enemies, Persecutors themselves are threatened to drink; with which God threatned several Nations, who had been his People. Israels great Enemies and Oppressors, for their insolent insulting over them, and for all their cruel and severe Dealings with them, *Ezek. 25. The Ammonites for their saying, Aha, Aha, against Gods Sanctuary when it was profaned, and against the land of Israel when it was desolate, and against the house of Judah when they went into captivity, v. 3. and in the next verses, there are Threatnings denounced against them for this further, and for that That they had claped their hands and rejoiced in heart, with all their despite against the Land of Israel, v. 6. and in the following verses Threatnings are denounced against them, and against Moab too in the 8, 9, and following verses; and v. 12. 'tis said from the Lord, That because Edom hath dealt against the house of Judah by taking vengeance, and hath greatly offended and revenged himself upon them; therefore did God threaten them sorely in the next verses; and again, in v. 15. 'tis said of the Philistines thus, Because they dealt by revenge, and have taken vengeance with a despiteful heart, to destroy for the old hatred; therefore***

therefore thus saith the Lord, I will stretch forth my hand, &c. in the next verses. God also threatens *Tims* for the lifting up her self against Israel; see it at large, *Ezek.* 26. and in Chap. 35. God by the Prophet there saith to Mount Seir thus, I am against thee, and I will stretch out mine hand against thee, and I will make thee most desolate, &c. v. 1, 2, 3, 4. and in v. 5. he declares the cause in these words, *Because thou hast a perpetual hatred, and hast shed the blood of the Children of Israel by the force of the sword, and in the time of their calamity, &c.* and in the next verses he saith, I will prepare thee to blood, and blood shall pursue thee, &c. So did God threaten the Heathen in general for the same cause, in Chap. 36. at the beginning; and in *Zephani*, Chap. 2. did he threaten *Moab* and *Ammon* upon this account, v. 8. I have heard the reproach of *Moab*, (said he,) and the reviling of the Children of *Ammon*, whereby they have reproached my people, and magnified themselves against their borders: therefore as I live saith the Lord there, v. 9. and so on, *Moab* shall as *Sodom*, &c. Nay, God threatned the Heads of *Jacob* and Princes of the house of *Israel*, for their hating of the good and loving of the evil, and (as the natural consequent thereof,) their hunting and persecuting of his People, *Micah* 3. 1, 2, 3, 4. And again he threatens *Edom*, in *Obadiah*, v. 9, & 10. for this cause too, in these words, *And thy mighty men, O Teman, shall be dismayed, to the end that every one of the mount of Esau may be cut off by slaughter: for thy violence against thy Brother Jacob, shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever:* Thus did God in those days, take notice of the abuses done to his, and did threaten their Persecutors. Yea further, in the days of the New Testament too, doth the Holy Ghost take special notice of these things; Christ himself pronounced a woe in general to such who should offend his, *Mat.* 18. said he there, *Whoever shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the Sea,* v. 6. and in v. 7. he adds a woe to the world because of offences, &c. and woe to the man by whom they come; this he spake in general, but more particular to the Jews: He in *Mat.* 23. 29, 30. pronounced Woes against them upon this account, and spake dreadfully to them, v. 34, & 37. in these words, *I send you Prophets, &c. and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall you scourge in your Synagogues, and persecute them from City to City: That upon you may come, all the righteous blood shed upon the Earth, from righteous Abel, &c.* According to which the Apostle spake, *1 Thess.* 2. of the Jews, he having said to the *Thessalonians*, v. 14. *That they also had suffered like things of their Countrymen, as they have of the Jews;* he v. 15. said of them in these words, *Who killed the Lord Jesus and their own Prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men; forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles, that they might be saved: Here were they highly engaged in a persecuting Spirit, and of opposition of the Gospel of Salvation. But what saith the Holy Ghost in the next words, concerning the Consequents thereof; To fill up their sin alway (saith he,) for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost. And least any Man should flatter himself with vain hopes of Escaping, tho he should have persisted in such a Spirit and Practice; Christ himself hath positively asserted, that God will avenge it, *Luke* 18. 7, 8. in these words, *Shall not God avenge his own elect, who cry day and night unto him, &c. I tell you, that he will avenge them speedily: Here or hereafter, vengeance will overtake the Enemies and Persecutors of his Elect; and that it is but just in God so to do, the Apostle intimates 2 Thess.* 1. 6, 7. and so on in these words, *Seeing it is a righteous thing with God, to recompence tribulation to them who trouble you, and to you who are troubled rest, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed, &c. to take vengeance on them who know not God, &c.* v. 9. Their punishment is said to be then their everlasting destruction, from the Presence of the Lord and the Glory of his Power: And the righteousness of God is proclaimed in his executing this vengeance on them, *Rev.* 16. v. 5, 6. in these words, *Thou art righteous, O Lord, &c. because thou hast judged thus: for they have shed the blood of Saints and Prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink, for they are worthy.* The Scripture hath taken notice, that sometimes God did execute threatned Judgments upon such in this World; so did he with all the Countreys before threat-*

ned, for their hatred against, and vengeance and cruelty they took and exercised upon his People *Israel*; and *Eliphaz* himself met with the same evil he had designed to have executed upon *Mordecai*. And sometimes is referred to be punished in the World to come, and shall remain upon them for ever; of which Judgments unavoidably to come upon them, that envious Spirit they were found in, was a full evidence, as the Apostle said, *Philip. 1. 28.* to the persecuted Saints in that day, by way of comfort to them, in these words, *And in nothing terrified by your Adversaries, which is to them an evident token of perdition, and to you of salvation, and that of God.* And to which also Christ spake home unto the Jews, *Mat. 25.* speaking there, *v. 31.* and so on, of his coming to judge the world; he *v. 41, 42.* and so on, saith, *Then shall the King say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels; for I was an hungry and ye gave me no meat, I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink, I was a stranger and ye took me not in, naked and ye clothed me not, sick and in prison and ye visited me not;* and he explains his meaning to them in *v. 45.* *In as much (saith he,) as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me;* and this direful Word followeth in *v. 46.* *These shall go away into everlasting punishment;* whence they might have easily inferred; that if it should be so sad with those who gave not Meat, Cloathed not, gave not Drink, visited not in Prisons in Sicknes; how much more sad would the Condition of such be who took away their Meat and Drink, made them Poor and Naked, cast them into Prison, were instrumental to make them Sick, yea, and take away their Lives too? If a Woe be pronounced against them who are at ease in *Zion*, and not grieved for the Affliction of *Joseph*, as in *Amos 6. 1, 2, 3.* and so on; what might those expect who were the Afflictors of *Joseph*? It was no light thing when God should come to avenge; for much the Apostle did give them to know in those days, when he had affirmed *Heb. 10. 30.* these words as that which God had said, *Vengeance belong to me, saith the Lord, and I will repay it, &c.* He subjoins this in the next verse, *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.* Therefore God himself by the Prophet *David, Psal. 2.* After he had been Prophecying of the Rage of Princes and People against the Lord and his Anointed; and had set forth their Vanity and the ineffectualness of their Attempts against him, in the beginning of the *Psalms*; he *v. 10, 11, 12.* adviseth them to submit, because of the sad Consequents of their persisting in their Rage, in these words, *Be wise now therefore, O ye Kings, be instructed ye Judges of the Earth; serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling; kiss the Son lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little, &c.* What dreadful Judgments hath befallen the Jews, since they in their rage against Christ, uttered these words, *Mat. 27. 25.* *His blood be upon us and our Children!* Thus do these divine Records especially note the great and seated Enmity which was in the Hearts of wicked Men in those days of the World, against good Men and Things; and the breakings out thereof in the several Ways they then took, to prevent the increase of them and it; together with the Causes or several Grounds from when that Spirit in those days did arise and took life; as also the dreadful Case of such, the sad Consequents of being found in such a Spirit and Practices.

And are not these things written (as are other things,) in the Scriptures of old, for the admonition of those upon whom the ends of the world are come? And doth it not concern all Men to instruct themselves therein, in order to their own escape from the Errors of these, and so save themselves from the direful Consequents and Effects depending upon them?

F I N I S.